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THOUGHTS

TO HELP AND TO CHEER.

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THOUGHTS

TO HELP AND TO CHEER.

JULY.

First Day.

"Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing."

Believe, and you shall love; believe much, and you shall love much; labor for strong and deep persuasions of the glorious things which are spoken of Christ, and this will command love. Certainly, did men indeed believe his worth, they would accordingly love him, for the reasonable creature cannot but affect that most which it firmly believes to be worthiest of affection.

Come, then, my soul! now learn to wield
The weight of thine immortal shield;
Put on the armor from above,
Of heavenly truth and heavenly love.

Second Day.

"WHOSOEVER is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him, and he cannot sin, because he is born of God."

Though holy and religious persons do much eye the law of God, and have a great regard unto it, yet it is not so much the sanction of the law as its reasonableness, and purity, and goodness, which do prevail with them; they account it excellent and desirable in itself, and that in keeping of it there is great reward; and that divine love wherewith they are actuated makes them become a law unto themselves.

Who shall prescribe a law to those that love?
Love 's a more powerful law which doth them move.

Third Day.

"He causeth the grass to grow for the cattle, and herbs for the service of man, that he may bring forth food out of the earth; and wine, that maketh glad the heart of man, and oil to make his face to shine, and bread which strengtheneth man's heart."

It is a joy to live even in this present world. Life upon earth suggests abundant reasons for gratitude, and brings abundant impulses to arouse and bless the soul. This present existence alone is beautiful. What a theatre of action is opened in this present world! How beautiful it is in many aspects! How beautiful it is even to the senses! So fair are the thousand scenes

which delight the eye, that it almost seems at times as if Infinite Love had toiled to robe this world in charms. Indeed, this wondrous beauty is one of the best proofs of an infinite goodness. If the sun goes forth from his chambers like a bridegroom, according to the Psalmist's image, the earth looks up to welcome him in the loveliness of a bride. And as man looks upon the world there is abundant reason why he should repeat the benediction of his Maker, and say in perpetual gratitude, — "It is good."

The earth, all light and loveliness,
In summer's golden hours,
Shines, in her bridal vesture clad,
And crowned with festal flowers,
So radiantly beautiful,
So like to heaven above,
We scarce can deem more fair that world
Of perfect bliss and love.

Fourth Day.

"WAIT on the Lord, and keep his way, and he shall exalt thee to inherit the land."

It is our duty to celebrate this day, not merely by idle pomp and vain display, but in a manner worthy of the great men and the great principles with which it is associated, by high purposes and magnanimous resolves, by deeper gratitude and a loftier faith. The character of man is always more severely tried by the passive than the active virtues. The same dignity of mind and elevation of character which gave our fathers the power to do, gave them also the power to bear and to suffer. Their noble example demands from us to keep our minds unsubdued by ease, with stern self-respect; and to watch for the overshadowing presence of that spirit of the Lord, without which there is no true liberty.

Faith of our fathers! Good men's prayers
Shall win our country all to thee;
And through the truth that comes from God
Our land shall then indeed be free.
Faith of our fathers! Holy faith!
We will be true to thee till death!

Fifth Day.

"I WILL remember the years of the right hand of the Most High. I will remember the works of the Lord, surely; I will remember thy wonders of old."

The more destitute we are of human aid, the more we ought to trust that providence which God is pleased to exert in our necessity.

Up to the hills I lift mine eyes,
The eternal hills beyond the skies;
Thence all her strength my soul derives,
There my Almighty refuge lives.

He guides our feet, he guards our way,
His morning smiles bless all our day,
He spreads the evening veil, and keeps
The silent hours while Israel sleeps.

Sixth Day.

"But if the spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his spirit that dwelleth in you."

Let us consider whether we know Christ; not by our acquaintance with systems of divinity, not by our skill in books, but by our keeping of God's commandments. All the writings which we converse with, they can but represent spiritual objects to our understandings; which yet we can never see in their own true figure, color, and proportion, until we have a divine light within to irradiate and shine upon them. Though

there be never such excellent truths concerning Christ and his Gospel set down in words and letters, yet they will be but unknown characters to us until we have a willing spirit within us that can decipher them; until the same spirit, by secret whispers in our hearts, do comment upon them which did at first indite them.

O happy Christian, who can boast
The Son of God is mine;
Happy, though humbled in the dust,
Rich in this gift divine.

Seventh Day.

"WHOSOEVER abideth in him sinneth not; whosoever sinneth hath not seen him, neither known him. But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things."

Is not prayer a study of truth, a sally of

the soul into the unformed infinite? No man ever prayed heartily without learning something. But when a faithful thinker, resolute to detach every object from personal relations, and see it in the light of thought, shall at the same time kindle science with the fire of holiest affections, then will God go forth anew into the creation.

All before us lies the way,
Give the past unto the wind;
All before us is the day,
Night and darkness are behind.

Eden with its angels bold,
Love and flowers and coolest sea,
Is less ancient story told
Than a glowing prophecy.

In the spirit's perfect air,
In the passions tame and kind,
Innocence from selfish care,
The real Eden we shall find.

Eighth Day.

"I can do all things through Christ, who strengtheneth me."

Anything can be done by him who earnestly desires what he ought; secure but your affections and passions, and then no temptation will be too strong; a wise man, and a full resolution, and an earnest spirit, can do anything of duty.

Know, my soul, thy full salvation,
Rise o'er sin, and fear, and care;
Joy to find, in every station,
Something still to do and bear.

Think what Spirit dwells within thee;
Think what Father's love is thine;
Think that Jesus died to win thee;
Child of heaven, canst thou repine?

Haste thee on from cross to glory,
Armed by faith and winged by prayer,
Heaven's eternal day before thee!
God's own hand shall lead thee there!

Ninth Day.

"I must work the works of him who sent me while it is day, for the night cometh when no man can work."

We must work, and that diligently; but not Satan's works nor our own, but the works of God. The soil must bear much, but its strength must not be wasted on weeds, however luxuriant; it must bear that which will be kept for ever. Human motives are frequently found strong enough to excite the careless to attention and the indolent to work; and these human motives are various, — the love of distinction, the wish to please our friends, the fear of punishment, the hope of reward. Let us be thankful that any who were before careless are now working; but let us not rest, nor even let them rest, till we may hope through God's spirit we and they are not working only, but working the works of God.

Do thy best always, — do it now, —
For in the present time,
As in the furrows of a plough,
Fall seeds of good or crime.

Tenth Day.

"EVERY man shall bear his own burden."

There is something awful in this truth, in whatever light we look at it. Though this is indeed our greatness, though it is in this, in a great measure, that our likeness to God consists, yet it is an awful thought. Our very greatness is appalling to us, but we cannot shake it off. We may, indeed, strive to break in upon the stillness of our solitary being, by crowding others around us, by the fever of excitement, or the sweet influences of a loving sympathy; but in all the pauses of outward things the solemn voice comes back, and the vision of our

single, proper, solitary being overshadows the spirits. We have each one this burden of a separate soul, and we must bear it. How do all deep-thinking persons, even in the daily routine, live apart from others, and more or less feel that they do so! Even ordinary life utters voices which add their witness to the truth if we will listen to them.

O Love Divine! lay on me burdens, if thou wilt;
Burdens to break in mercy my fond, feverish sleep;
Turn comforts into awful prophets to my guilt,
Let me but at thy wondrous footstool fall and weep.

Eleventh Day.

"Be ye also ready; for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of Man cometh."

Nothing is so terrible as death to those who are strongly attached to this life. It

is strange that we do not form a more just judgment of the present and the future. We are as infatuated with this world as if it were never to come to an end. The names of those who play distinguished parts in life perish with them. Why do we so cling to life? And whence comes it that we shrink so from death? It is that we do not desire the kingdom of heaven, and the glories of a future life.

Erelong, when Sovereign Wisdom wills,
My soul an unknown path shall tread,
And strangely leave, as strangely fills,
This frame, and waft me to the dead.

Twelfth Day.

"The path of the just is as the rising light, shining more and more to the perfect day."

The habit of acting uniformly and inva-

riably from the best motives, is one to which the most excellent persons make only some near approaches, slowly and by continual efforts. It can be attained in any considerable degree only by him who is not satisfied by any partial success; who is not discouraged by his failures; but who, forgetting what is behind, and stretching forward to what is before, presses to the goal.

Press on, press on! ye sons of light,
Untiring in your holy fight;
Still treading each temptation down,
And battling for a brighter crown.

Press on, press on! still look in faith
To him who vanquished sin and death;
Then shall ye hear God's word, "Well done!"
True to the last, press on, press on!

Thirteenth Day.

"He giveth power to the faint; and to the feeble abundant strength."

We need not let the present be so eclipsed by the future, — we need not look upon its scenes or upon ourselves as so mean beneath this ulterior resplendence, — that life now should be darkened by the contrast, instead of cheered by the connection. It is no sad lot that we suffer, no penance that our years on earth perform, purifying by tears and mortification a natural disqualification for any higher state. On the contrary, the germs of the immortal growth are within us now, and will spring up, not by the bruising and crushing of our nature, but by its glorious opening out.

Life is onward, — heed it,
In each varied dress;
Your own act can speed it
On to happiness.
His bright pinion o'er you,
Time waves not in vain,
If Hope chants before you
Her prophetic strain.

Life is onward, — prize it,
In sunshine and in storm;

O do not despise it
In its humblest form.
Hope and joy together,
Standing at the goal,
Through life's darkest weather
Beckon on the soul.

Fourteenth Day.

"WHEREFORE let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to him in well-doing as unto a faithful Creator."

The Bible tells us that our whole existence here is disciplinary, that the joys and sorrows, hopes and fears, which form a part of it, are designed to fit the soul for its immortality. And yet how many feel that they could advance to higher stages of Christian life, but for the multitude of their worldly cares! Is it not God, O Christian, who in his providence has laid these cares

upon thee. If God's great, undivided object is thy spiritual improvement, is there not some misapprehension or wrong use of those cares if they do not tend to advance it? Are those thousand vexations which come upon us through the unreasonableness, the carelessness, the constitutional failings, or ill-adaptedness of others to our peculiarities, — are they not forming a large item of the disquietudes of life? And yet how very few look beyond the human agent, and feel that these are trials coming from God! But were God known and regarded as the soul's familiar friend, — were it felt that there is not one of the smallest of life's troubles that has not been permitted by him, and permitted for specific good to the soul, — how much more heart-work there would be in prayer! How constant, how pervading, it might become! How it might settle and clear the atmosphere of the soul!

When thou hast thanked thy God for every blessing sent,
What time will then remain for murmurs or lament?

Fifteenth Day.

"To be spiritually-minded is life and peace."

We often hear it said of one or another individual, that they are very spiritual, or very unspiritual. What is meant by these expressions? What is it to be spiritually-minded? To be spiritually-minded is to have a sense, a conviction, an inward knowledge of the reality, solidity, and security of spiritual things. To find in the unseen region of a heavenly existence a source of motive power, a vast auxiliary, an inexhaustible reserve of strength, coming in aid of natural conscience, which alone is insufficient to direct or reclaim us; but which, reinforced from these divine ranks, irresistibly triumphs with ever fresh moral victory. A supreme, uncreated excellence and glory must haunt, elevate, sanctify, and draw us to another citizenship

than that we hold amid these clay-built abodes, before the spiritual mind, which is life and peace, can be unfolded within us. Breather of earthly air, yet partaker of a heavenly privilege! birth of yesterday, yet heir of immortality! awake to thy spiritual relations, — live up to their solemn dignity. Bind their sanctifying bonds around all the details of earthly pursuit. Insert them fast and clinging into every thought and purpose, that when lower ties part they may majestically lift thee up.

Lord, grant that we that state may see;
Open our ears that we thy voice may hear,
And in thy spirit-land may ever be,
And feel thy presence with us always near.

Sixteenth Day.

"Behold, I bring you glad tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people."

When the Son of God for the first time addressed the assembled multitude, his sermon was a revelation of joy. He opened his lips to pronounce blessings on the meek, the merciful, the pure in heart. Grateful joy for every blessing which proceeds from the Giver of every good and perfect gift; joy, trust, and cheerful resignation under affliction and bereavement, as the appointments of the same paternal will; joy, triumphant joy in persecution and in death; — these are the precepts of that Gospel which brought life and immortality to light.

Thou Power sublime, whose throne is firmly seated
On stars and glowing suns!
O could I praise thee, — could my soul, elated,
Waft thee seraphic tones, —
Had I the lyres of angels, — could I bring thee
An offering worthy thee, —
In what bright notes of glory would I sing thee
Blest notes of ecstasy!

Seventeenth Day.

"HAVE mercy upon me, O God, according to thy loving-kindness; according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions."

We were born alone, and alone we must die; and yet through all our life we, as it were, flee from loneliness, which is alike the beginning and the end of our earthly transit. Does not this seem to say that we are never at ease but when we lose the consciousness of what we are? All that we can do, when we find ourselves grown artificial and excited, is to go apart where none but God sees us, and fall down as dust and nothingness before him, and plead with him against ourselves, and pray him to abolish in us all that is not real and eternal.

Is a mighty famine now
In thy heart and in thy soul?

Discontent upon thy brow?
Turn thee, God will make thee whole!

Fall before him on the ground,
Pour thy sorrow in his ear;
Seek him while he may be found,
Call upon him while he 's near.

Eighteenth Day.

"But know that the Lord hath set apart him that is godly for himself."

What can I want if God is with me; yes, God himself! he is the infinite and the only good. Vanish, all ye false goods of earth, unworthy of the name ye bear! God alone is good, he who ever dwells in my soul. Let him deprive me of my pleasures, of riches, honor, power, health, friends, and life, while he does not estrange himself from my heart I shall still be rich; I shall have lost nothing that will advance my true good; I shall have preserved my all.

Light of life, seraphic fire!
Love divine, thyself impart;
Every fainting soul inspire;
Enter every drooping heart.

Nothing more can we require,
We will covet nothing less;
Be thou all our hearts' desire,
All our joy, and all our peace.

Nineteenth Day.

"But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us."

"We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed."

As a plant upon the earth, so a man rests upon the bosom of God; he is nourished by unfailing fountains, and draws at his need inexhaustible power.

We will trust God. The blank interstices
Men take for ruins, He will build into
With pillared marbles rare, or knit across
With generous arches, till the fane 's complete.
This world has no perdition, if some loss:
The selfsame cherub faces which emboss
The rail lean inward to the mercy-seat.

Twentieth Day.

"ABIDE in me, and I in you."

This longing desire of thy heart, to be *one with Christ*, will soon put a stop to the vanity of thy life, and nothing will be admitted to enter thy heart or proceed from it but what comes from God and returns to God. Thy mouth will have a watch set upon it, thy ears would willingly hear nothing that does not tend to God, nor thy eyes be open but to see and find occasions of doing good.

That mystic word of thine, O Sovereign Lord,
Is all too pure, too deep, too high, for me;
Weary of striving, and with longing faint,
I breathe it back again in prayer to thee.

Abide in me, I pray, and I in thee;
From this good hour, O leave me never more!
Then shall the discord cease, the wound be healed,
The life-long bleeding of the soul be o'er.

Twenty-first Day.

"HUMBLE yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time; casting all your care upon him, for he careth for you."

We have need of all our crosses. When we suffer much, it is because we have strong ties, which it is necessary to loosen. We resist, and we thus retard the Divine appointment; we repulse the heavenly hand, and it must come again; it would be wiser to yield ourselves at once to God.

Can loving children e'er reprove
With murmurs whom they trust and love;
Creator! I would ever be
A trusting, loving child to thee;
As comes to me or cloud or sun,
Father! thy will, not mine, be done.

Twenty-second Day.

"THIS I say, therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their minds."

Nothing is stronger than humility that groweth out of itself; or weaker than pride that resteth upon its own bottom. "Without me ye can do nothing." He doth not say, can do a little, but nothing. We must carry this always in our minds, that that which is begun in self-confidence will end in shame. We should renounce ourselves for the spirit's sake, and think ourselves too good for any base sin to lodge in. What

should pride, envy, and passion do in a heart consecrated to the spirit of meekness and holiness?

Spring up, my soul, with ardent flight,
Nor let this earth delude thy sight
With glittering trifles, gay and vain:
Wisdom divine directs thy view
To objects ever grand and new,
And faith displays the shining train.

Twenty-third Day.

"For it is God which worketh in you, both to will and to do of his good pleasure."

This spirit, the invisible energy by which God is drawing men to goodness, is around us as well as within us. It does not merely operate upon the mind in directly imparting light and strength; its power is to be felt in the works and providence of God, in our natural sentiments of right and

wrong, in whatever enlarges our conceptions of duty, raises our affections, or animates us in any good work.

Of all thy creatures, both in sea and land,
Only to man thou hast made known thy ways,
And put the pen alone into his hand,
And made him secretary of thy praise.

But who hath praise enough? Nay, who hath any?
None can express thy works but he that knows them;
And none can know thy works, which are so many
And so complete, but only he that owns them.

Twenty-fourth Day.

"We shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality."

If life be regarded as the commencement of immortality, it will be freed from trifling associations, and still more from those which are low and debasing. It will as-

sume a permanence to our eyes from its first moment to its last. It will appear fastened to the Rock of Ages. It will be the opening of a boundless career. Death will no more be a violent extinction, a fathomless and frightful chasm, a blank oblivion; but it will be a change, a landing-place, an entrance into the everlasting abode of spirits and of God. It will be regarded by the contemplative as

> Life's last shore,
> Where vanities are vain no more,
> Where all pursuits their goal obtain,
> And life is all retouched again;
> When in their bright results shall rise
> Thoughts, virtues, friendships, griefs, and joys.

Twenty-fifth Day.

"THY will be done in earth, as it is in heaven."

From seeking strength for outward work,

we pass inwards by means of this petition, and seek deliverance from the daily recurring sense of estrangement from God, because of spiritual weakness. The prayer, so full of courage, which has asked nothing less than that we should do God's will as it is done by the angels, is also filled with the humility and the self-knowledge which recognizes daily weakness and failure, and implies the need of daily self-examination, to see whether we are at peace with God and man.

Now, Father, now, in thy dear presence kneeling,
Our spirits yearn to feel thy kindling love;
Now make us strong: we need thy deep revealing
Of trust and strength and calmness from above.

Twenty-sixth Day.

"Rejoice in the Lord alway; and again I say, Rejoice."

It is not enough patiently to submit, but we must *thankfully* receive, all that God appoints us. For there is no reason why we should be *patient* but what is as good and strong a reason why we should be thankful. If we were under the hands of a wise and good physician, who could not mistake or do anything but what certainly tended to our benefit, it would not be enough to be patient and abstain from murmuring against him, but it would be as great a breach of duty and gratitude to him not to be pleased and thankful for what he did, as it would be to murmur at him.

Rejoice in God alway,—
When earth looks heavenly bright,
When joy makes glad the livelong day,
And peace shuts in the night.

Rejoice when care and woe
The fainting soul oppress,
When tears at wakeful midnight flow,
And morn brings heaviness.

When should not they rejoice,
Whom Christ his brethren calls,
Who hear and know his guiding voice,
When on their hearts it falls?

Twenty-seventh Day.

"And now I exhort you to be of good cheer; for the Lord is good."

A Christian may, for many days together, see neither sun nor star, neither light in God's countenance nor light in his own heart; no grace issuing from God, no grace carrying the soul to God. In this dark condition, if they do as St. Paul and his company did, cast anchor even in the dark night of temptation, and pray still for day, God will appear and all shall clear up, and we shall see light without, and light within, — the day-star will arise in our hearts.

Pray for the light! though rough may be
Thy path, it shall be bright;
For God himself shall dwell in thee,
And God is perfect light.

Twenty-eighth Day.

"And a voice came out of the clouds, saying, This is my beloved Son, hear him."

The cloud hung over the mount of transfiguration, and the voice which proceeded from it was addressed to the disciples who were standing there; but not to them alone, but to all disciples of all succeeding time. Amidst the noise of earthly pursuits and contentions, when our minds are distracted or in danger of being absorbed by a multitude of inferior claims, that voice may be distinguished above the confusion, saying unto us, "Hear him." In the time of temptation, a voice may be discerned, ut-

tered from that heavenly height, in tones by which other sounds are awed, saying unto us, "Hear him." In the time of trial and affliction, that holy voice comes down with consolation and healing, saying unto us, "Hear him." Let not the exhortation be ever uttered in vain. Let us hear the well-beloved Son of God. Let us hear his words of grace and truth. Let us hear them in his precepts, his doctrines, his promises, his prayers. Let us hear them and ask of God grace to obey and observe them, that they may be to us, not words only, but life and salvation.

Though heralded by naught of fear,
Or outward sign or show;
Though only to the inward ear
It whispers soft and low;

Though dropping as the manna fell,
Unseen, yet from above,
Holy and gentle, — heed it well, —
The call to Truth and Love.

Twenty-first Day.

"Rejoicing in Hope."

Hope is a vigorous principle; it is furnished with light and heat to advise and execute. It sets the head and heart to work, and animates a man to do his utmost. And thus by perpetual pushing and assurance it puts a difficulty out of countenance, and makes a seeming impossibility give way.

Wiser it were to welcome and make ours
  Whate'er of good, though small, the present brings;
Kind greetings, sunshine, song of birds and flowers,
  With a child's pure delight in little things;
And of the griefs unborn to rest secure,
Knowing that Mercy ever will endure.

Thirtieth Day.

"Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God."

When prayer shall become the element of all Christian life, when the heart shall be always kept open toward God, when we shall live in the spirit and walk in the spirit, and thus have God and Christ abiding within us, there will be a great development of moral character in all directions. The virtues heretofore painfully cultivated will grow up fair and fruitful out of this inward life. Christian character will not be formed after one model, nor a monotonous repetition of external forms, but healthfully varied by all that is original, free, and natural in human organization. Then shall virtue be beauty also, not mere morality, but graceful and harmonious as the sights and sounds of nature.

Serene shall be our day and bright,
And happy shall our nature be,
When love is an unerring light,
And joy its own security.

Thirty-first Day.

"LORD, I believe. Help thou mine unbelief."

There is an inseparable intermixture of love with belief and a pious affection, in receiving divine truth; so that in effect as we distinguish them they are mutually strengthened the one by the other. If you ask, How shall I believe? I answer, Love.

My prayer do thou inspire,
And oh! that prayer receive!
Lord, teach me what I should desire;
Lord, help me to believe.

AUGUST.

First Day.

"WHEREFORE comfort one another with these words."

It is not our work to rule the world, but to submit to Him that does. The motions of Providence are all judicious, — the "wheels are full of eyes." It is enough that the affairs of Zion are in an unerring hand. It may support thy heart to consider that in these troubles God is performing that work in which thy soul would rejoice, if thou didst see the design of it. If you could but see how God, in his secret counsel, has exactly laid the whole plan of your salvation, even to the means and circumstances; could you but discern the admirable harmony of divine dispensations, their mutual relations, together with the

general respect they all have to the last end; had you liberty to make your own choice, you would, of all conditions in the world, choose that in which you now are. Providence is like a curious piece of tapestry made of a thousand shreds, which single appear useless, but put together they represent a beautiful history to the eye.

Blind unbelief is sure to err,
And scan its work in vain;
God is his own interpreter,
And he will make it plain.

Second Day.

"THOSE that be planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of our God."

Moral, spiritual excellence, that which we confide in and revere, is not, and from its very nature cannot be, an instinctive,

irresistible feeling infused into us from abroad, and which may grow up amidst a life of indulgence and ease. It is in its very essence a free activity, an energy of the will, a deliberate preference of the right and the holy to all things, and a chosen, cheerful surrender of everything to these. It grows brighter, stronger, in proportion to the pain it bears, the difficulties it surmounts. Can we wonder that we suffer? Is not suffering the true school of a moral being? As administered by Providence, may it not be the most necessary portion of our lot?

Peaceful mission is not mine;
Springs that give me life
Burst from this strange earth, as if
Born with inward strife.

Third Day.

"SEARCH the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life; and they are they which testify of me."

There is but one book in the world that makes religion consist in loving God more than ourselves, and renouncing self for him. All others that repeat this great truth are borrowed from this. All truth is taught in this fundamental truth. The book that has disclosed to us the nature of God, and the nature of man, and the true worship of the heart, must be divine. This book has changed the face of the world. It has taught and cherished, even in the midst of the most corrupt and impious society, the most difficult and the most gentle virtues. Such a book ought to be read as if descended from heaven to the earth.

Within that sacred volume lies
The mystery of mysteries!
Happiest they of human race,
To whom our God has given grace
To read, to hope, to fear, to pray,
To lift the latch and force the way;
And better had they ne'er been born,
Who read to doubt, or read to scorn.

Fourth Day.

"THEREFORE, whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock. And the floods came, and the winds blew and beat upon that house; and it fell not; for it was founded upon a rock."

He that hath not the life of Christ in him hath nothing but the name, nothing but a fancy of Christ; he hath not the substance of him. He that builds his house on this foundation, — not an airy notion of Christ swimming in his brain, but Christ really dwelling and living in his heart, — as our Saviour himself witnesseth, he "buildeth his house upon a rock." But he that builds his comfort upon an ungrounded persuasion that God from all eternity hath decreed him to life and happiness, and seeketh not for God really dwelling in his soul, —

he builds his house upon a quicksand, and it shall suddenly sink and be swallowed up; "his hope shall be cut off, and his trust shall be a spider's web; he shall lean upon his house, but it shall not stand; he shall hold it fast, but it shall not endure."

Christ, whose glory fills the skies,
Christ, the true, the only light,
Sun of Righteousness, arise!
Triumph o'er the shades of night;
Day-spring from on high, be near!
Day-star, in my heart appear!

Fifth Day.

"And a vision appeared to Paul in the night. There stood a man of Macedonia, and prayed him, saying, come over into Macedonia, and help us."

Do you believe in the Gospel of Christ? Do you receive it as the precious gift of

God for the redemption of the world? If you do, then it is your duty to do what you can to spread it abroad among men, — to increase its influence over their hearts and lives. Do you believe that man is an immortal and accountable spirit, whose actions have eternal issues, and whose character and conduct here determine his destiny hereafter? If you do, then to aid in the preparation of an immortal soul, through the faith of the Gospel, for heaven and happiness, must be to you the very highest and noblest object to which a portion of your wealth, your energies, and your influence can be directed.

Men of thought! be up and stirring
Night and day;
Sow the seed, withdraw the curtain,
Clear the way!
Men of action, aid and cheer them,
As ye may!
There 's a midnight blackness changing
Into gray;
Men of thought and action,
Clear the way!

Sixth Day.

"Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God."

Now this is what St. Paul bids us do, and the promise is, not that we shall have whatsoever we may ask, but that we shall have peace, and the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Jesus Christ. We shall not, indeed, always have what we ask; but if we ask in faith we shall always have peace. Of this we shall never fail.

Place on the Lord reliance,
My soul with courage wait;
His truth be thine affiance,
When faint and desolate.

His might thy heart shall strengthen,
His love thy joy increase;
Mercy thy days shall lengthen;
The Lord shall give thee peace.

Seventh Day.

"Our soul waiteth for the Lord: he is our help and our shield."

We may rejoice and be thankful when God honors us by making us the instruments of doing great things for his kingdom here below. But we need not be cast down, when by his providence he sees fit to break in upon our most cherished plans for good. He knows better than we what springs to touch and what wheels to turn in the mighty machinery of his moral government. He knows what ordering is best to fit us for heaven, and the humble and trusting spirit, a heart patiently waiting and loving its Saviour's will, upon a sick-

bed, may constitute a more perfected life than many a one whose deeds ring round the world.

God doth not need
Either man's works or his own gifts. Who best
Bear his mild yoke they serve him best. His state
Is kingly; thousands at his bidding speed,
And post o'er land and ocean without rest;
They also serve who only stand and wait.

Eighth Day.

"WHEREFORE let him that standeth take heed lest he fall."

We rail at the world, but we carry the world in our hearts. We denounce the world, but retain its principles. Jealousy of authority, love of reputation that we do not merit, dissipation in society, seeking those indulgences that minister to sense, cowardice in the exercise of Christian du-

ties. A disinclination for the study of the truths of the Gospel. This is the world: it dwells within us, and we love it, while we are so anxious for its favor, and apprehensive lest it should forget us.

Worship not the toys of Time,
Keep thy thoughts above the skies;
Through a world of fleeting shadows,
Walk with heaven-directed eyes.

Ninth Day.

"Our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel."

Christ is supposed to have come to bear the penalties of an outward law. Such benevolence would indeed be worthy of praise, but it is an inferior form of benevolence. The glory of Christ's character, its

peculiar brightness, seems to consist in his having given himself to accomplish an inward, moral, spiritual deliverance of mankind. He was alive to the worth and greatness of the human soul. He saw in every human being a spirit of divine origin and godlike faculties, which might be recovered from all its evils, which might become an image and a temple of God. The greatness of Jesus consisted in his devoting himself to call forth a mighty power in the human breast, to kindle in us a celestial flame, to breathe into us an inexhaustible hope, and to lay within us the foundation of an immovable peace.

He came, sweet influence to impart,
A gracious, willing guest,
While he can find one humble heart
Wherein to rest.

Tenth Day.

"I APPLIED my heart to know, and to search and to seek out wisdom. Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments."

Know thyself, the last and the pride of creation; the link uniting divinity with matter: behold a part of God himself within thee: remember thine own dignity; nor dare to descend to evil or meanness. Thy soul is the monarch of thy frame; suffer not its subjects to rebel against it.

Who know to live, and know to die,
Their souls are safe, their triumph nigh.

Eleventh Day.

"See that ye refuse not him who speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused him who spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven."

Suppose some glorified form of a departed friend should appear to you, with the announcement that this year was to be to you one of special probation and discipline; that no incident of your daily life was to fall out by accident, but each to be a finished and indispensable link in a bright chain to draw you upward to the sky.

With what new eyes should we then look on our daily lot! And if we found in it not a single change, — the same cares, perplexities, and uninteresting labors, — with what new meaning would every incident be invested, with what other and sub-

limer spirit could we meet them! Yet if announced by one rising from the dead, with the visible glory of the spiritual world, this truth could not be asserted more clearly and distinctly than Jesus Christ has stated it already. Not a sparrow falleth to the ground without our Father; yea, even the hairs of our head are all numbered. Not till the belief in these declarations, in their most literal sense, becomes the calm and settled habit of the soul, is life ever redeemed from drudgery and dreary emptiness, and made full of interest, meaning, and divine significance. Not till then do its grovelling wants, its wearying cares, its stinging vexations, become to us ministering spirits; each one, by a silent but certain agency, fitting us for a higher and perfect sphere.

Twelfth Day.

"But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own souls."

Not alone to know, but to act according to thy knowledge, is thy distinction, proclaims the voice of my inmost soul. Not for indolent contemplation of thyself, nor for brooding over emotions of piety. No; for action was existence given thee; thy actions, and thy actions alone, determine thy worth.

The good, the fruitful ground,
Expect not here nor there;
O'er hill and dale and plain 't is found:
Go forth, then, everywhere!

And duly shall appear,
In verdure, beauty, strength,
The tender blade, the stalk, the ear,
And the full corn at length.

Thirteenth Day.

"WATCH thou in all things, endure afflictions, make full proof of thy ministry."

No man can obtain the favor of God by words and imperfect resolutions, by lazy actions and a remiss piety; but by severe counsels and sober actions, by watchfulness and prudence, by doing excellent things, with holy intentions and vigorous prosecutions.

Speed thee, O Christian! on thy way,
And to thy armor cling;
With girded loins the call obey,
That grace and mercy bring.

There is a battle to be fought,
An upward race to run,
A crown of glory to be sought,
A victory to be won.

Faint not, O Christian! for thy sighs
Are heard before His throne.
The race must come before the prize,
The cross before the crown.

Fourteenth Day.

"He that handleth a matter wisely shall find good; and whoso trusteth in the Lord, happy is he."

You cannot live *for* men without living *with* them. Serve God, then, by the active service of men. Contemplate more the good you can do, than the evil you can only lament; allow yourself to see the loveliness of nature, amidst all its imperfections, and employ your moral imaginations, not so much by bringing them into contrast with the model of ideal perfection, as in gently blending some of the fainter colors of the latter with the brighter hues of real experienced excellence.

Lord, give the light we want;
With soundest knowledge fill;
From noxious error guard our heart,
From prejudice our will.

Fifteenth Day.

"LET love be without dissimulation; mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate; be not wise in your own conceit."

Were there a class of persons in society who, by some peculiar moral training, could maintain in themselves a high degree of simplicity and sincerity, their moral power would be without a rival. There is no true dignity but with simplicity and sincerity. All greatness of intellect tends to express itself in writing with simplicity, and such must be the distinction of the loftiest moral character.

Lord, that I may learn of thee,
Give me true simplicity:
Wean my soul, and keep it low,
Willing thee alone to know.

Sixteenth Day.

"O THAT they were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end!"

Our life is too continually outward, and visible, and pent up in the throng of men. We are not enough at large and alone with God. We live in the midst of this stately world till it bewilders and stuns us, and when we turn from it to things unseen, they are too pure for our deadened sense. There is no cure for this but to be more alone with God. Solitude and silence are full of reality.

A bright or dark eternity in view,
With all its fixed, unutterable things,
What madness in the living to pursue,
As their chief portion, with the speed of wings,
The joys that death-beds always turn to stings.

Seventeenth Day.

"HEAR my prayer, O Lord! give ear to my supplications; in thy faithfulness answer me, and in thy righteousness. And enter not into judgment with thy servant, for in thy sight shall no man be justified. But I will hope continually, and yet praise thee more and more."

Forgive, O Father! if presumptuous thought
Too daringly in aspiration rise;
Let not thy child all vainly have been taught
By weakness, and by wanderings, and by sighs
Of sad confession! Lowly be my heart,
And on its penitential altar spread
The offerings worthless, till thy grace impart
The fire from heaven, whose touch alone can shed

Life, radiance, virtue! Let that vital spark
Pierce my whole being! wildered else and dark.

Eighteenth Day.

"I WILL instruct thee, and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go; I will guide thee with mine eye. Be glad in the Lord, and rejoice, all ye that are upright in heart."

We may think we have many important concerns, but in reality we have but one. If that is attended to, all others will be done; if that is wanting, however successful we may seem, all is wrong. Why, then, should we divide our hearts and our occupations? Henceforth may that sole business of life have my undivided attention. Cheered by the presence of God, I will do at the moment, without anxiety, according to the strength which he shall give me, the work that his providence as-

signs me. And may the aid of his spirit teach me to praise him aright, and find my happiness in his favor!

Lord, with fervor I would praise thee,
For the bliss thy love bestows,
For the pardoning grace that saves me,
And the peace that from it flows;
Help, O God, my weak endeavor;
This dull soul to rapture raise;
Thou must light the flame, or never
Can my love be warmed to praise.

Nineteenth Day.

"BLESSED art thou, Simon Bar-jona, for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven."

Peter had not been taught by man, but by God. Jesus then adds, I will give to thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and this promise is repeated to all the dis-

ciples. What revelation is here meant? What power was given unto the disciples? It was the power which faith has of creating faith. In the order of Providence, it depends upon him to whom God has given faith, whether others around him shall have faith or be without it. If he is true to his faith, if his life is rooted in it, if his words are colored by it, if his tone and temper are constantly informed by this pure and subtle spirit, then he carries with him a sphere of influence by which to produce a like faith in all who are prepared to receive it. God is to him no name, but a reality; Christ, not an historical Messiah, but a present Saviour; eternal life, no future, but a present immortality. By the contagion of this faith, he awakens like convictions in other minds. You ask, How is this faith to be obtained? we cannot all, like Peter, receive it through direct inspiration. But Christian experience and the New Testament show us that faith is an act of the soul in which God and man concur; God

manifesting his love, and man relying on it. The holy spirit, or that inward influence which is represented as coming from God through Christ, to form Christ within us, show to the heart the all-embracing, all-abiding love of God. Our work is to open our heart to receive this influence, thankfully to accept it, firmly to repose upon it. Faith is therefore God's work for man, being a gift of his Spirit, and man's work, in seeking for and receiving this divine influence.

Twentieth Day.

"MEDITATE upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear unto all."

Virtue is not the conformity of outward actions to a rule, nor is religion the fear of punishment or the hope of reward. Virtue

is the state of a just, prudent, benevolent, firm, and temperate mind. Religion is the whole of those sentiments which such a mind feels towards an infinitely perfect being.

Give to us a humble mind,
Patient, fearless, just, and kind;
Meek and lowly let us be,
Full of goodness, full of thee.

Still, O Lord, our faith increase,
Give to us the fruits of peace;
Utterly abolish sin,
Write thy law of love within.

Twenty-first Day.

"Be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God, for Christ's sake, has forgiven you."

Charity does not demand of us that we

should not see the faults of others; we must in that case shut our eyes. But it commands us to avoid attending to them unnecessarily, and that we be not blind to the good, while we are so clear-sighted to the evil that exists.

Go, bend to God, and leave to him
The mystery of thy brother's heart,
Nor vainly think his faith is dim
Because in thine it has no part.
He too is mortal, and, like thee,
Would soar to immortality.
There may be hope as pure, as bright,
As ever sought eternity, —
There may be light, clear, heavenly light,
Where all seems cold and dark to thee.

Twenty-second Day.

"My Father and I will love him, and we will come to him, and make our abode with him."

Now, who does not see that this inward personal communion with Christ, through the medium of the Father's influence, is the one thing most needed for both private and public Christianity? Because we are not living thus inwardly near to Christ, inwardly fed by his life, our souls want strength, beauty, peace, profound conviction, and power. Instead of a fixed aim steadily pursued, we are moved by the worldly opinions around us. But the whole of a Christian's life must flow from God and Christ. To live in the spirit is the only true life; we are away from ourselves when our hearts are away from God.

Heavenly Father, life divine!
Change my nature into thine!
Move and spread throughout my soul,
Actuate and fill the whole!
Be it I no longer now
Living in the flesh, but thou.

Twenty-third Day.

"And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee."

Many sensitive natures are worn away by the constant friction of what are called little troubles. But to the Christian who really believes in the agency of God in the smallest events of life, confides in his love, and makes his sympathy his refuge, the minute cares and perplexities of life become an affiliating bond between the soul and its God. God is not known by abstract definitions, but known as a man knoweth his friend. He is known by the hourly wants he supplies, by every care with which he momentarily sympathizes,—every temptation which he enables us to surmount. And as we find in every changing situation, in every trouble, from the lightest sorrow to those which wring our souls

from its depth, that he is equally present, and that his gracious aid is equally adequate, our faith seems gradually almost to change to sight; and God's sympathy, his love and care, seem to us more real than any other source of reliance, and multiplied cares and trials are only new avenues of acquaintance between us and heaven.

But when life's cares and toils unite
To lengthen all the tedious day,
When petty trials cloud the light,
And small temptations vex our way; —

Too oft our hearts neglect to seek
The aid which God alone can give;
And restless, ill at ease, and weak,
Without Him in the world we live.

Twenty-fourth Day.

"THERE be many who say, Who will show us any good? Lord, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us."

I do not expect to find good in any place where the light of God's countenance is not, and where God's word declares, as well as man's experience, that good cannot be. But wherever that light can shine within the round of human suffering, as well as of human enjoyment, *there is good.*

In vain we trace Creation o'er
In search of sacred rest;
The whole Creation is too poor
To make us fully blest.

Let earth with all her charms depart,
Unworthy of the mind;
In God alone this restless heart
An equal bliss can find.

Twenty-fifth Day.

"It is good for me that I have been afflicted, that I may learn thy statutes."

As the soil needs the hard ploughshare

to open it for the seed, and the rain from heaven to mature the fruit, so it is that the soul needs to have the iron enter, and the dews of grace descend, before holiness and truth will make their abode there.

I met thy chastisement all unsubdued,
But thou didst strongly say beware,
And with the bitterness of woe renewed
My soul, and taught me to forbear.
In cheerful hope I now find all things bright,
Though oft beheld in shadow, oft in light.

Twenty-sixth Day.

"And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple."

The greater our dread of crosses, the more necessary they are to us. Be not cast down when the hand of God is heavy upon you. We must measure the greatness of our evils by the violence of the

remedies that the Physician of souls thinks necessary for our cure. We *may* make our trials a source of love, and confidence, and consolation. "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." Blessed are they who weep, they who sow in tears, for they shall reap, with joy ineffable, the harvest of eternal life and felicity.

Let us pray for Christ's spirit of love and self-renunciation. What can we suffer that he has not suffered. Weak, cowardly nature, be silent; look at thy master, and be ashamed to complain. Let thy love to him reconcile thee to thy cross; then, though thou shalt suffer, it will be willingly.

Faint not, poor traveller, though the way
Be rough, like that thy Saviour trod;
Though cold and stormy lower the day,
This path of suffering leads to God.

Go, sufferer, calmly meet the woes
Which God's own mercy bids thee bear;
Then, rising as thy Saviour rose
Go, his eternal victory share.

Twenty-seventh Day.

"And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them."

Would you know who is the greatest saint in the world? It is not she who prays most or fasts most; it is not she who gives alms most, or is most eminent for temperance and justice, &c.; but it is she who is always thankful to God, who wills everything that God willeth, who receives everything as an instance of God's goodness, and has a heart always ready to praise God for it.

She has a world of ready wealth,
Our minds and hearts to bless;
Spontaneous wisdom breathed by health,
Truth breathed by cheerfulness.

Twenty-eighth Day.

"THEN spake Jesus again unto them, saying: I am the light of the world; he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life."

These are the words of Christ, by which we are admonished how we ought to imitate his life and manners if we would be truly enlightened and delivered from all blindness of heart. Let, therefore, our chiefest endeavor be to meditate on the life of Jesus Christ. And whosoever would fully and feelingly understand the words of Christ must endeavor to conform his life wholly to the life of Christ.

Thou, O Christ, art all I want;
More than all in thee I find:
Raise the fallen, cheer the faint,
Heal the sick, and lead the blind.

Thou of life the fountain art;
Freely let me take of thee;
Spring thou up within my heart;
Rise to all eternity.

Twenty-ninth Day.

"But he that doeth wrong, shall receive for the wrong he has done."

The strict and solemn law of retribution teaches us that all coming experience is to be affected by every present feeling; that every future moment of being must answer for every present moment; that one moment, sacrificed to sin, or lost to improvement, is for ever sacrificed and lost; that one year's delay, or one hour's wilful delay, to enter the right path, is to put you back so far, in the everlasting pursuit of happiness; and that every sin, ay, every sin of a good man, is thus to be answered for,

though not according to the full measure of its ill-desert, yet according to the rule of unbending rectitude and impartiality.

And aye with Him who counts the sands,
And holds the waters in his hands,
I know a lasting record stands
Inscribed against my name,
Of all this mortal part has wrought;
Of all this thinking soul has thought;
And from these fleeting moments caught,
For glory, or for shame.

Thirtieth Day.

"MAN is born to trouble, as the sparks fly upward."

Who knoweth what a day may bring forth? The early morning may shine out brightly, but soon clouds arise and obscure its brightness; and often the bow of prom-

ise, discerned through the falling rain, is the only token of future sunshine. So is life. But for the gracious promises made visible to the eye of faith, a dark and troubled passage, a discipline by which the will is to be subjected, self sacrificed, and the heart purified.

Ill that God blesses is our good,
And unblest good is ill;
And all is right that seems most wrong,
If it be his dear will.

When obstacles and trials seem
Like prison-walls to be,
I do the little I can do,
And leave the rest to Thee.

Thirty-first Day.

"YEA, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil."

These words a youthful daughter requested her father to read to her as she lay on her dying bed, after a sudden illness.

In such an exigence are we to mourn, as over "an unfinished work, an untimely end? Are we ready, indeed, to image thus departing by broken columns; by flowers blighted in their early budding. Are we ready to imagine the purposes of heaven disappointed? Do we fear that the column thus broken will never be completed, because we are not permitted to see its beauty; that these flowers so suddenly blighted will never produce their natural and perfect fruit? We forget that it is because they are better fitted for the air of heaven than for the storms of earth, that they are withdrawn from sight that they may ripen there."

Unto our Father's will alone
One thought hath reconciled;
That He whose love exceedeth ours
Hath taken home his child.

Fold her, O Father, in thine arms,
And let her henceforth be
A messenger of love between
Our human hearts and thee.

SEPTEMBER.

First Day.

"Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him."

Seriousness is the best temper in which we can receive either happiness or affliction. I love to look upon the mountain over whose unaltered surface pass the alternate shade and sunshine: fit emblem of the steady heart which presents its adamant to the hopes and fears which are nothing but the shade and sunshine of life. To the heart which is fixed, trusting in God, they shall soon pass away, — hope shall be lost in fruition, and perfect love shall cast out fear.

Be mine the faith that spurns the bounds of time,
The soul whose eye can future glories see,
The converse here with things of purer clime,
And Hope above the stars that soars on wing sublime.

Second Day.

"FATHER, I will that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am."

When we ask for Scriptural evidence of the reunion of friends in a future state, are we not answered by every passage from Scripture which speaks of that state as a social one? And where in the Scripture is it spoken of in any other way? Whether the mention is incidental or direct, the Bible constantly presents heaven to our thoughts as a place where the righteous shall meet together. If we listen to Jesus, we hear him declare that where he is his disciples shall be also. If we turn to the

Epistles, Paul tells us that when Christ, our life, shall appear, we also shall appear with him in glory. The writer to the Hebrews points with rapture to the general assembly and church of the first-born which are written in heaven. Thus the blessed in heaven are always represented as being in society, with their brethren, with angels, with Jesus, and with God. How consoling is the thought, that those who have been separated will there again meet; that Christ shall be their head, and they shall part no more!

Third Day.

"WHY hast thou made me?"

Of God's living universe we are permitted to form a part. Do we ask why we were created? What moved the Eternal Spirit to create us? It was his own com-

municative goodness; a wish to impart somewhat of that which he himself enjoyed; and this, in the language of man, we term the promoting of his glory. For ever may our hearts rise in thankfulness to God for our existence, privileges, and hopes.

For God is paid when man receives;
To enjoy is to obey.

Fourth Day.

"I KNOW thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it."

We say to ourselves that we are busily engaged in our duty, and that our duty is God's work. We say this to ourselves if anything leads us to examine into our state; but it would be well if we said it

not only to excuse ourselves, but habitually; if we said it not to ourselves only, but to God. For if we are busied in God's work, we are fellow-workers with God; and what more natural than to ask his aid and blessing on our labors? Let us come before him, and do so. But there is an unwillingness to do this. We talk and think about our employments, but we are not so apt to pray about them. Wherefore is this, that, being busied, as we say, in God's work, we are not fond of thinking of him who is working with us? Is it not too plain that we feel it is not God's work, but our own, — that we have taken it, in a manner, from his co-operation, and separated it from his blessing? We may be well assured that this is a true touchstone, if every morning we bring, as it were, our work before God, and crave his aid and blessing on it, — if every evening we come again to render our account to him, to say how much we have done, and to ask his pardon for having done so little, and so imperfectly.

Fifth Day.

"And bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ."

Is it not possible to allow no unpleasant objects to dwell upon our minds any longer than we can derive benefit from them? May we not bring our sensibilities to pain very much under our own control, and use them only for discipline? How should every opportunity be seized for invigorating our minds and active powers, — firmness, fortitude, application, — so that successful, unwearied energy and cheerfulness may be the result.

Endeavor thus to live; these rules regard;
These helps solicit; and a steadfast seat
Shall then be yours, among the happy few
Who dwell on earth, yet breathe empyreal air,
Sons of the morning.

Sixth Day.

"For if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath."

Our business here is to fit ourselves for a better state of existence; not by depreciating or renouncing those pleasures which may innocently and properly be enjoyed, but by correcting the faults to which we are prone, cultivating our better dispositions, doing the will of God by doing all we can for the good of others, and fixing our dearest hopes in heaven, which is our resting-place and our everlasting home.

And let us hope that to our praise
Our God not only reckons
The moments when we tread his ways,
But when the spirit beckons, —
That some slight good is also wrought
Beyond self-satisfaction,
When we are simply good in thought,
Howe'er we fail in action.

Seventh Day.

"I AM not alone, because the Father is with me."

The insufficiency of human sympathy is only to be remedied by an abiding sense of the fulness and perfection of that love and care with which an Almighty Father watches over his children. We can never feel isolated or deserted if we have accustomed ourselves to heavenly companionship. Whatever our sorrows, whatever our loneliness, may be; in whatever way we may be disappointed or forsaken; a practical faith that the Mightiest of all beings, that the Wisest and Best of all beings, is ever near us, fills up the void and surrounds us with an eternal sympathy.

Who is alone, if God be nigh?
Who shall repine at loss of friends,
While he has One of boundless power,
Whose constant kindness never ends,

Whose presence felt enhances joy,
Whose love can stop the flowing tear,
And cause upon the darkest cloud
The pledge of mercy to appear?

Eighth Day.

"To him that ordereth his conversation aright will I show the salvation of God."

Worldly men seldom read good books, but there is one book they always read, and that is the book of a Christian's life and conversation.

As sanctified to noblest ends,
Be each refreshment sought,
And by each varied providence
Some kind instruction brought.

When to laborious duties called,
Or by temptations tried,
We 'll seek the shelter of Thy wings,
And in Thy strength confide.

In every changing scene of life,
Our grateful hearts would be
With Thee, amidst the social throng,
In solitude with Thee.

Ninth Day.

"Be kindly affectionate one to another with brotherly love, in honor preferring one another."

There are many who waste and lose affection by careless and often unconscious neglect. It is not a plant to grow untended; the breath of indifference or rude touch may destroy for ever its delicate texture. There is a daily attention to the slight courtesies of life which can alone preserve the freshness of affection. The easy surprises of pleasure, earnest cheerfulness of assent to slight wishes, and habitual respect to opinions, the polite abstinence

from personal topics in general company, unwavering attention to the comfort of those around us, both at home and abroad, and the careful preservation of those proprieties of conversation and manner which are sacred when before the world, are some of the secrets of that true and rare happiness which age and habit alike fail to impair or diminish.

Lord! subdue our selfish will;
Each to each our tempers suit,
By thy modulating skill,
Heart to heart, as lute to lute.

Sweetly on our spirits move;
Gently touch the trembling strings:
Make the harmony of love
Music for the King of kings!

Tenth Day.

"See that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time because the days are evil."

Fix your thoughts upon some action or instruction of Jesus Christ; and when you are convinced of the truth which you have been considering, make a serious and particular application of it to the amendment of your life.

Sleep not, soldier of the cross!
Foes are lurking all around;
Look not here to find repose,
This is but thy battle-ground.

Eleventh Day.

"My soul is weary of my life."

Whitefield said to Tennant, "Do you not rejoice that your time is so near at hand, when you will be called home and freed from all the difficulties of this checkered scene?" "No," said the aged saint, "my business is to live as long as I can, as well as I can, and to serve my Lord and Master

as faithfully as I can, until he shall think proper to call me home."

Why dost thou talk of death?
Why dost thou long to go?
The Master who has placed thee here
Has work for thee to do.

What wilt thou say in heaven?
What wilt thou say in heaven?
When the Master asks, "What hast thou done
With the talents I have given?

"I gave thee mind and eloquence
Thy fellows to persuade;
Where are the thousands, by thy power
More wise and holy made?

"And last, I gave thee chastisement,
That thou might be my son;
Where is the trusting heart which said,
My God, thy will be done!"

Twelfth Day.

"For it is not a vain thing for you; because it is your life."

There is nothing sheds so fine a light upon the human character as candor. It was called whiteness by the ancients, for its purity and beauty; and it has only won the esteem due to the most admirable of virtues. As it is the most beautiful, so it is the safest, of moral qualities. None fall into so few mistakes, none darken and deform themselves with so little falsehood and wrong, none so free from the pain of doing wrong, as those who walk among the pitfalls and miasmas, passions and errors, of tainted life, clothed habitually with candor.

O Father! keep my spirit quick
To every form of wrong;
And in the ear of sin and self
May thy rebuke be strong.

Thirteenth Day.

"And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye?"

You who complain so much of what others make you suffer, do you think that you cause others no pain? You who are so annoyed at your neighbors' defects, are you perfect? How astonished you would be if those you cavil at should make all the comments that they might upon you! But even if the whole world were to bear testimony in your favor, God, who knows all, who has seen all your faults, could confound you with a word; and does it never come to your mind to fear, lest He should demand of you why you had not exercised towards your brother a little of that mercy which he who is your Master so abundantly bestows on you.

Teach me to feel another's woe,
To hide the fault I see;
That mercy I to others show,
That mercy show to me.

Fourteenth Day.

"TEACH me thy way, O Lord, and lead me in a plain path."

As you meet with crosses in your lot in this world, let your desire be rather to have your spirit humbled and brought down than to get the cross removed. I mean not but that you may take all lawful means for the removal of your cross in dependence upon God, but only that you be more concerned to get your spirit to bow and ply, than to get the crook in your lot evened.

Then in content possess your hearts,
Unenvious of another's lot;
For those which seem the easiest parts
Have travail which ye reckon not.

And he is bravest, happiest, best,
Who, from the task within his span,
Earns for himself his evening rest,
And an increase of good for man.

Fifteenth Day.

"KEEP sound wisdom and discretion; then shalt thou walk in thy way safely, and thy foot shall not stumble."

If any of you say that you know Christ, and have an interest in him, and yet (as perhaps too many do) still nourish ambition, pride, vainglory, within your breasts, harbor malice and wrong feeling to your neighbor in your hearts, eagerly seek after this world's pelf, and make the strength of your parts and endeavors serve that blind Mammon, the god of this world; or if you aim only at yourselves in your lives, and make yourselves the compass by which you sail, and the star by which you steer

your course, looking at nothing higher or more noble than yourselves; deceive not yourselves, you have neither seen Christ, nor known him, you are deeply incorporated with the spirit of this world, and have no true sympathy with God and Christ, — no fellowship with them.

Believe not those who say
The upward path is smooth,
Lest thou shouldst stumble in the way,
And faint before the truth.

It is the only road
Unto the realms of joy;
But he who seeks that blest abode
Must all his powers employ.

Sixteenth Day.

"While ye have the light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light."

What avails it us to live in the noonday

light of the Gospel, if our hearts be still shut against it, and so within we be nothing but darkness? As a house that is close shut up, and hath no entrance for light; though it is day without, still it is night within.

Walk in the light! so shalt thou know
That fellowship of love
His spirit only can bestow,
Who reigns in light above.

Walk in the light! and thou shalt own
Thy darkness passed away,
Because that light hath on thee shone
In which is perfect day.

Seventeenth Day.

"FEAR God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man."

The first question to be proposed by a rational being is, not what is profitable,

but what is right. Duty must be primary, prominent, most conspicuous among the objects of human thought and pursuit. If we cast it down from its supremacy, if we inquire first for our interests and then for our duties, we shall certainly err. We can never see the right clearly but by making it our first concern.

Stern daughter of the voice of God,
O Duty! if that name thou love
Who ask a light to guide, a rod
To check the erring and reprove;
Thou who art victory and law
When empty terrors overawe;
From vain temptations set me free,
And calm the weary strife of frail humanity.

Eighteenth Day.

"But in singleness of heart fearing God."

In singleness of heart to believe, and do what highest we know, — how few and simple are the words! Yet their meaning fathoms the depth and compasses the horizon of life.

Live and love,
Doing both nobly, because lowlily;
Live and work; strongly, because patiently!
And for the deed of death, trust it to God,
That it be well done, unrepented of,
And not to loss. And thence with constant prayers
Fasten your souls so high, that constantly
The smile of your heroic cheer may float
Above all floods of earthly agonies,
Purification being the joy of pain.

Nineteenth Day.

"THE righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance."

Marvellous is the power of a righteous life. As the words of the wise act upon

the mind, so the life of the good acts upon the soul. Its influence is shed abroad into the hearts of friends, and through them, in ever-enlarging circles, into the hearts of others. The individual, the community, the state, which has the memory of a truly righteous life to look up to, has a possession worth more than overflowing treasuries. Truth written is powerful; but truth lived and acted out is yet more mighty. Thus the memory of the truly good who have lived becomes the world's chief blessing.

Take the good man's life, and ponder
What its meaning is for thee;
Blessed as the hand of healing
May its influence be.

Twentieth Day.

"WHO is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? Let him show

out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom."

Good deeds are very fruitful; out of one good action of ours God produceth a thousand, the harvest whereof is perpetual. If good deeds were utterly barren and incommodious, I would seek after them for the conscience of their goodness; how much more shall I now be encouraged to perform them, that they are so profitable both to myself and others.

Sow in the morn thy seed,
At eve hold not thy hand,
To doubt and fear give thou no heed,
Broadcast it o'er the land!
Beside all waters sow,
The highway furrows stock,
Drop it where thorns and thistles grow,
Drop it upon the rock!

Twenty-first Day.

"When wisdom entereth into thine heart, and knowledge is pleasant unto thy soul, discretion shall preserve thee, understanding shall keep thee."

Books, friends, health, reputation, competency, may give occasions, but not bounds, to our rejoicing. We may not make them God's rivals, but his spokesmen. In themselves they are nothing, but in God worth our joy. These may be used, but so as they may be absent without distraction. Let them go; so God alone is present with us, it is enough. He were not God if he were not all-sufficient.

And there 's a sweeter joy,
Wherever we may be:
Danger nor death can e'er destroy
Our trust, O God, in thee.

Twenty-second Day.

"And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God."

Awake, my spirit! be more fervent; cast off the galling chains that drag thee to earth; plume thine immortal wings and rise, — rise, and live worthy of thy exalted destiny! Religion is ever cheerful in her teaching. She brings with her a remedy for every ill. She whispers to thee, Though earthly friends forsake thee, thou hast a Friend above, whose loving-kindness changeth not; though here thou hast no certain trust, no enduring home, there has one gone to prepare thee a mansion in his Father's house, where thou wilt have rest. With such prospects to animate thee, keep

the way of the Lord with a perfect heart, weary not in well-doing.

Awake, my drowsy soul! awake,
And view the threatening scene;
Legions of foes encamp around,
And treachery lurks within.

Then to the work of God awake!
Behold thy Master near;
The various, arduous task pursue
With strength and purpose clear.

Twenty-third Day.

"MANY, O Lord my God, are thy wonderful works which thou hast done, and thy thoughts which are to us-ward: they cannot be reckoned up in order unto thee; if I would declare and speak of them, they are more than can be numbered."

Men and women are for ever putting

their finger upon what they don't possess, and not upon what they do. This pulling to pieces all your mercies to look for the one thing wanting, is like a dead fly spoiling all the sweet ointment of all the little gratitude you possess. Try and look at the bright side of all God's gifts and dealings. Set your mercies, as it were, on the table, and have them ever before you, and put their drawbacks on the shelf and think no more about them.

Though thou be blind or have a halt,
Or in thy face deformit still,
So it come not through thy default,
No man should e'er reprove thy ill.
Blame not thy Lord, — such is his will!
Spurn not thy foot against the wall;
But with meek heart and prayer still
Obey, and thank thy God for all.

Twenty-fourth Day.

"And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly."

Our birth may appear to us but as our first entrance upon that sphere of activity, which is the world we now inhabit; life, but the length of time allotted us for our mortal task; and death, but the moment when, throwing aside our mortal body, — as a traveller, fatigued and harassed by the length of his route, throws off his soiled and dusty garments when he has arrived at his home, — we shall take possession of the new and better organization which awaits us on the other side of the grave.

Beyond the flight of time,
Beyond the reign of death,
There surely is some blessed clime,
Where life is not a breath,

Nor life's affections transient fire,
Whose sparks fly upward and expire.

There is a world above
Where parting is unknown,
A long eternity of love,
Formed for the good alone;
And faith beholds the dying here
Translated to that glorious sphere.

Twenty-fifth Day.

"Give unto the Lord the glory due unto his name; bring an offering and come into his courts."

When we shall see God as he is, and see all the events of human life from the first to the last day, in all their proportions and their relations to the designs of God, then shall we exclaim, O Lord! thou alone art good and wise. Let man, then, admire what he understands, and let him be silent

when he cannot comprehend. And let him wait with humility and patience till all shall be made plain to him.

I have known Thee in the whirlwind,
I have known Thee on the hill,
I have loved Thee in the voice of birds,
Or the music of the rill!

I dreamt Thee in the shadow,
I saw Thee in the light,
I heard Thee in the thunder-peal,
And worshipped in the night!

All beauty, while it spoke of Thee,
Still made my soul rejoice,
And my spirit bowed within itself
To hear thy still, small voice.

Twenty-sixth Day.

"As God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people."

There is only one way to love God; it is to take no step except with him and for him.

Drink in this influence low-born care,
And all the train of mean desire;
Refuse to breathe unholy air,
And 'mid the living light expire.

Twenty-seventh Day.

"For he that will love life and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile."

No prudence is a sufficient guard, or can always stand watching when a man is in perpetual floods of talk; for prudence attends after the manner of an angel's ministry; it is despatched on messages from God, and places guards, and calls upon the man to awake, and bids him send out spies and observers, and then goes about his own

ministries above. An angel does not sit by a man as a nurse by a baby's cradle, watching every motion, and the lighting of a fly on the child's lip. And so is prudence: it gives rules, and proportions out our measures, and prescribes us cautions, and by general influences orders our particulars. But he that is given to talk cannot be secured by all this; he can no more be wise in every period of a long and running talk, than a musician can deliberate and make every motion of his hand by the division of his notes to be chôsen and distinctly voluntary.

When will the din of earth grate harshly on our ears?
When we have once heard plain the music of the spheres.

Twenty-eighth Day.

"WHOM therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you. God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands."

A curious child, who dwelt upon a tract
Of inland ground, applying to his ear
The convolutions of a smooth-lipped shell;
To his belief the monitor expressed
Mysterious union with its native sea.
E'en such a shell the universe itself
Is to the ear of faith; and there are times
Authentic tidings of invisible things;
Of ebb and flow, and ever-during power;
And central peace, subsisting at the heart
Of endless agitation. Here you stand,
Adore and worship when you know it not;
Pious beyond the intention of your thought;
Devout above the meaning of your will!

Twenty-ninth Day.

"THE grass withereth, the flower fadeth, but the word of our God shall stand for ever."

Year after year, from the time of the prophet, the same untiring chant has been uttered by the withering grass and the fading flowers. The feelings excited by the autumnal season are unvaried, but they are so true and deep, and so near to the fountains of life, that they are always fresh, always powerful. Time after time we may go into the autumnal woods, and while the yellow leaves fall slowly down, and touch the earth with a sound so soft that it is almost silence, the selfsame thoughts are suggested. "As for man, his days are as grass; as a flower of the field, so he flourisheth." But does the prophet stop here? No; kindled by the inspiration of heaven, he passes immediately from

the thought of death to that which shall continue to live. The word of our God shall stand for ever. Happy will it be for us, if, while we perceive the transitoriness of nature and of man's mortal state, we feel the steadfastness of God's word, and the everlasting mercy of his providence.

Let sickness blast, let death devour,
If heaven shall recompense our pains;
Perish the grass, and fade the flower,
If firm the word of God remains.

Thirtieth Day.

"For here we have no continuing city, but we seek one to come."

Since we stay not here, being people but of a day's abode, and our age is like that of a fly, and contemporary with that of a gourd, we must look somewhere else for an abiding city, a place in another country,

to fix our house in whose walls and foundation is God, where we must rest or else be restless for ever. For whatsoever ease we can have or fancy here will shortly be changed into sadness or tediousness. We must carry up our affections to the mansions prepared for us above, where eternity is the measure, felicity is the state, and God our portion and inheritance.

Our country is Immanuel's ground;
We seek that promised soil;
The songs of Zion cheer our hearts,
While strangers here we toil.

OCTOBER.

First Day.

"By humility and the fear of the Lord are riches, honor, and life."

What is there more delightful than to be sincere, tranquil, in harmony with our conscience, having nothing to fear and nothing to pretend. The more you seek for God, the nearer he will be to you; every step that you take towards him will bring you peace and consolation.

We do not consider it constraint to do those things which we love to do; we find a pleasure in sacrificing ourselves to any one that we truly love.

Thus the more we advance in perfection, the more willing we are to follow its Author.

The deep religion of a thankful heart,
Which rests instinctively in Heaven's law
With a full peace, that never can depart
From its own steadfastness;
In thought and word and feeling so to live
As to make earth next heaven.

Second Day.

"And hope maketh not ashamed."

Never let us be discouraged with ourselves. It is not when we are most conscious of our faults that we are the most wrong; on the contrary, we are less so. We see by a brighter light, and let us remember, for our consolation, that we never perceive our sins till we are willing to cure them. God never makes us feel our weakness but that we may be led to seek strength from him.

The food of hope
Is meditated action; robbed of this

Her sole support, she languishes and dies.
We perish also; for we live by hope
And by desire; we see by the glad light,
And breathe the sweet air of futurity,
And so we live, or else we have no life.

Third Day.

"YEA, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for thou art with me."

Let us prize every truth of the doctrine of immortality. We look within and without us for some pledge that we are not to perish in the grave; that this mind, with its thoughts and affections, is to live, and improve and be perfected, and to find that joy for which it thirsts and which it cannot find on earth. Christ's teaching on this subject is invaluable; but what power does this teaching gain when we stand by his sepulchre, and see the stone rolled away,

and behold the great revealer of immortality rising in power and triumph, and ascending to the life and happiness he has promised!

Angel, roll the rock away!
Death, yield up thy mighty prey!
See! he rises from the tomb,
Glowing in immortal bloom.

Fourth Day.

"INASMUCH as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

If thou hast no money, yet thou must have mercy, and art bound to pity the poor and to pray for them; and if thou dost what thou art able to do, be it little or great, corporal or spiritual, the charity of alms or the charity of prayers, a cup of wine or a cup of water, if it be but done

from love, or from a desire to help all or any of Christ's poor, it shall be accepted according to that a man hath, not according to that he hath not.

Father! the spirit Jesus knew
We humbly pray to know aright,
That we may be disciples true
Of him whose way was love and light.

Bright be the places where we tread,
Amid earth's suffering and poor,
Until that day when tears are shed,
And broken sighs are heard no more.

Fifth Day.

"He that is faithful in that which is least, is faithful also in much."

Our lives as well as our hearts belong to God; he has given them both for his service. We cannot always be doing a great work, but we can always be doing some-

thing that belongs to our condition. To be silent, to suffer, to pray, when we cannot act, is acceptable to God.

'T is not the deeds the loudest lauded
That brightest shine;
There 's many a virtue unapplauded,
And yet divine.

'T is not the word that sounds the sweetest
That 's soonest heard;
A sigh, when humbled thou retreatest,
May be preferred.

Sixth Day.

"Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright, for the end of that man is peace."

"And the work of righteousness shall be peace, and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever."

"The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace."

God has mercifully connected our happiness and our duty. Religion calls for no sacrifice which a true regard to our well-being alone would not lead us to make.

God's kingdom come, with power and grace,
To every heart of man!
His peace, and joy, and righteousness,
In all our bosoms reign!

The righteousness that never ends,
But makes an end of sin;
The joy that human thought transcends,
Into our souls bring in.

The kingdom of established peace
Which can no more remove;
The perfect powers of godliness,
The omnipotence of love.

Seventh Day.

"Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts: and in the hidden part thou shalt make me to know wisdom. The sac-

rifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise. Open thou my lips, and my mouth shall show forth thy praise."

If we would desire a true reformation, as some would be thought to do, let us begin in reforming our hearts and lives, by keeping Christ's commandments. All outward forms and models of reformation, though they be never so good in their kind, yet they are of little worth to us without this inward reformation of the heart. If adulterate silver that hath much alloy in it have never so current a stamp put upon it, yet, notwithstanding, it will not pass when the touchstone trieth it. We must be reformed within with a spirit of fire, and a spirit of burning to purge us from the dross and corruption of our hearts and refine us as gold and silver, and then we shall be reformed truly, and not before.

Not in proud and idle dreaming,
But in glowing, active zeal,
Humbly its own worth esteeming,
Laboring still for human weal,
Christian! shall to thee be given
Wisdom, grace, the love of heaven.

Eighth Day.

"BEHOLD, thus shall the man be blessed who feared the Lord: happy shalt thou be, and it shall be well with thee."

Happiness is nothing but the releasing and unfettering of our souls from all these narrow, scant, and particular good things, and the espousing of them to the highest and most universal good, which is not this or that particular good, but goodness itself; and this is the same thing that we call holiness. Which because we ourselves are so little acquainted with, (being for the most part ever courting a mere shadow of it,)

therefore we have such low, abject, and beggarly conceits thereof; whereas it is in itself the most noble, heroical, and generous thing in the world. For I mean by holiness nothing else but God stamped and printed upon the soul.

Who is the happy Christian? Who is he
That every man in life should wish to be?
Whose powers shed round him in the common strife,
Or mild concerns of ordinary life,
A constant influence, a peculiar grace,
Whom neither shape of danger can dismay,
Nor thought of tender happiness betray;
Who, not content that former worth stand fast,
Looks forward, persevering to the last;
From well to better daily self-surpassed;
And, while the mortal mist is gathering, draws
His breath in confidence of Heaven's applause;—
This is the happy Christian, this is he
Whom every man in life should wish to be.

Ninth Day.

"Now therefore perform the doing of it; that as there was a readiness to will, so there may be a performance also out of that which ye have."

Self-activity is the condition of self-preservation; mental development is the condition of self-activity. The greater the power of thought in any individual, the greater is his spontaneous action; and the greater the spontaneous action, the more completely will he live and be. A thousand influences lie in wait to ensnare mortal man. The whole world is an influence. But the strongest of all is individual character. Character makes the man. Man can boast of nothing as his own, except the energy which he displays. If unable to arouse this energy, let him assume it, let him place himself by a sudden effort in circumstances where he must will.

All conviction should be valiant, —
Tell thy truth, if truth it be;
Never seek to stem its current, —
Thoughts, like rivers, find the sea;
It will fit the widening circle
Of eternal verity.

Tenth Day.

"And God said, Let there be light: and there was light." "Thou hast showed thy people hard things: thou hast made us to drink the wine of astonishment." "Take heed, therefore, that the light which is in thee be not darkness."

Mysterious Night! when our first parent knew
Thee, from report divine, and heard thy name,
Did he not tremble for this lovely frame,
This glorious canopy of light and blue?
Yet 'neath a curtain of translucent dew,
Bathed in the rays of the great setting flame,
Hesperus with the host of heaven came,
And lo! creation widened in man's view.

Who would have thought such darkness lay concealed
Within thy beams, O Sun? or who could find,
Whilst fly, and leaf, and insect stood revealed,
That to such countless orbs thou mad'st us blind?
Why do we then shun death with anxious strife?
If light can thus deceive, wherefore not life?

Eleventh Day.

"LABOR, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth."

God has given us strength of body, and faculties of mind, in order to enable us, without being burdensome to others, to provide for our own wants, and those of our natural dependants. To forbear to use those powers, and so to depend on the labor of others for what should be the fruit of our own, is nothing less than a species of palpable dishonesty.

How happy is he born or taught
Who serveth not another's will;
Whose armor is his honest thought,
And simple truth his highest skill.

Twelfth Day.

"RETURN unto thy rest, my soul, for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee. For thou hast delivered my soul from death, mine eyes from tears, and my feet from falling."

God has more ways of providing for us, of helping us, than we can possibly imagine; it is infidelity to desire to confine him to our ways and methods.

He who hath helped me hitherto
Will help me all my journey through,
And give me daily cause to raise
New trophies to his endless praise;

Though rough and thorny be the road
It leads me home apace to God;
Then count the present trial small,
For heaven will make amends for all.

Thirteenth Day.

"WATCH ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong."

He who enters the service of duty does not enter a thankless service. But the rewards of duty are not rest from labor, but greater tasks, more arduous, hazardous, unachieved undertakings. There are indeed moments of ease; but only moments like the shutting of the eyelid, to clear the eye, and fit it for more intense, comprehensive, and penetrating vision. Let him who has attained moral strength and moral glory rejoice in his attainments. But let him not rest satisfied. For the perfection of virtue and happiness does not consist in

the strength and glory we have attained, but in going on for ever from strength to strength, and from glory to glory.

Spring up, my soul, with ardent flight,
Nor let this earth delude thy sight,
Wisdom divine direct my view
To objects ever grand and new,
And fix on that unchanging home
Where never-fading pleasures bloom!

Fourteenth Day.

"It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in man."

If we place our hopes or our dependence upon the power, the wisdom, the counsel, or the interest we have in man, and not in God only, we shall surely be disappointed.

Lean not on earth, 't will pierce thee to the heart,
A broken reed at best, but oft a spear;
On its sharp point peace bleeds and hope expires.

Fifteenth Day.

"I HAVE loved thee with an everlasting love. God loved us while we were yet sinners."

God has not waited for us to love him. Before all time, before we were endowed with life, he thought of us, and thought of doing us good. His beneficent hand has bestowed every variety of blessing on us; neither our unfaithfulness nor our ingratitude has dried up the fountains of his goodness to us, or arrested the streams of his bounty.

None loves me, Father! with thy love,
None else can meet such wants as mine.
O grant me, as Thou shalt approve,
All that befits a child of thine:
From doubt, from slavish fear release,
And give me confidence and peace.

Sixteenth Day.

"And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him."

There be many that speak of new glimpses and discoveries of truth, of dawnings of Gospel light; and no question but God has reserved this for the very evening and sunset of the world; for in the latter days knowledge shall be increased; but I wish, while we talk about light, and dispute about truth, we would walk more as "children of the light." If St. John's rule be good, that no man truly knows Christ but he that keepeth his commandments, it is much to be suspected that many of us who pretend to light have a thick darkness overspreading our souls.

By each saving word unspoken,
By thy truth as yet half won,
By each idol still unbroken,
By thy will, yet poorly done, —
Hear us! hear us!
God Almighty, help us on!

Seventeenth Day.

"LEARN of me, for I am meek and lowly of heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls."

There is no true and constant gentleness without humility; while we are proud of ourselves, we are easily offended with others. Let us be persuaded that nothing is due to us, and then nothing can disturb us. Let us apply to our hearts those touching and sublime words of the Son of God.

Blest are the meek, He said,
Whose doctrine was divine,
The humble-minded earth possess,
And bright in heaven shall shine.

While here on earth they stay
Calm peace with them shall dwell,
And thankful hope and heavenly joy
Beyond what tongue can tell.

Eighteenth Day.

"For our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world."

Much of our reading, much of our labor, seems mere waiting; it was not that we were born for. Patience, then, is for us, is it not? Patience, and still patience. When we pass, as presently we shall, into some new infinitude, out of this Iceland of negations, it will please us to reflect that, though we had few virtues or consolations, we bore with our indigence, nor once strove

to repair it with hypocrisy or false heat of any kind.

For not to man on earth is given
The ripe fulfilment of desire;
Desire of heaven itself is heaven,
Unless the passion faint and tire:
As upward still, from hope to hope,
From faith to faith the soul ascends,
And who has scaled the ethereal cope
Where the sublime succession ends?

Nineteenth Day.

"When ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants, we have done that which it was our duty to do."

Let us cherish the remembrance of every scene and of every event which may have reminded us how far we have fallen short of the standard to which our duty, our

honor, our interest, and our comfort required us to aspire.

Be with me, Lord, where'er I go;
Teach me what thou wouldst have me do;
Suggest whate'er I do or say;
Direct me in thy narrow way.

Prevent me lest I harbor pride,
Lest I in my own strength confide;
Show me my weakness, let me see
I have my power, my all, from thee.

Twentieth Day.

"HAVING food and raiment, let us therewith be content."

They that deny themselves will be sure to find their strength increased, their affections raised, and their inward peace continually advanced.

O Thou, who kindly dost provide
For every creature's wants,
I thank thee, Lord of nature wide,
For all thy goodness lent.

And if it please thee, heavenly guide!
May never worse be sent,
But, whether given or denied,
Lord, bless us with content!

Twenty-first Day.

"NEGLECT not the gift that is in thee."

As you have no mistress to serve, so let your own soul be the object of your daily care and attendance. Nourish it with good works, give it peace in solitude, get it strength in prayer, make it wise with reading, enlighten it with meditation, make it tender with love, sweeten it with humility, humble it with patience, enliven it with psalms and hymns, and comfort it with

frequent reflections upon future glory. Keep it in the presence of God, and teach it to imitate those guardian angels who, although they attend to human affairs and the lowest of mankind, yet always behold the face of our Father who is in heaven.

A charge to keep I have,
A God to glorify;
A never-dying soul to save,
And fit it for the sky.

Twenty-second Day.

"When I awake, I am still with Thee."

In this quiet hour let us contemplate, as in the presence of God, all the proofs we have experienced of his mercy; the sins that have been forgiven us, the snares which we have escaped, the protection we have received; and let us bless him for the

power to perceive and enjoy his glorious manifestation in nature, and the consciousness that he is always about us.

Still, still with Thee when the purple morning breaketh,
When the bird waketh and the shadows flee,
Fairer than morning, lovelier than the daylight,
Dawns the sweet consciousness, I am with Thee.

Alone with Thee, amid the mystic shadows,
The solemn hush of nature newly born;
Alone with Thee in breathless adoration,
In the calm dew and freshness of the morn.

Twenty-third Day.

"How long shall I take counsel in my soul, having sorrow in my heart daily?"

The good man may be exposed to severe trials and sorrows, but he believes that affliction cometh not forth from the dust, that trials and sorrows are appointed by

God as a necessary part of the discipline of the present life; that they are intended to purify and strengthen the mind; to call forth and give vigor to the most excellent virtues. He believes that their power is but for a season; that he that endures to the end shall be safe, that not a hair of his head shall perish. He believes that the messenger of affliction, when received as sent from God, will erelong change his countenance and appear as an angel of glory.

In trouble and in grief, O God!
Thy smile hath cheered my way;
And joy hath budded from each thorn
That round my footsteps lay.

The hours of pain have yielded good
Which prosperous days refused;
As herbs, though scentless when entire,
Spread fragrance when they 're bruised.

Twenty-fourth Day.

"But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon."

The stones and timbers are laid, turned over and over, and hewed ere they be set up in the building, and not set up just as they come out of the quarry and the wood. Were they capable of a choice, such of them as would refuse the iron tool would be refused a place in the building. Pray how think ye to be made meet for heaven by the warm sunshine of this world's ease, getting all your will here? Nay, that would put your mouth out of taste for the joys of the other world.

Go, clothe the naked, lead the blind,
Give to the weary rest;
For sorrow's children comfort find,
And help for all distressed.

Twenty-fifth Day.

"Be careful for nothing, but in everything, by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God; and the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."

We musk ask with faith, a faith so firm that it never hesitates. Will not God love the heart that trusts in him? When we pray, says St. Cyprian, with entire assurance, it is himself that has given to us the spirit of our prayer. We must join humility with confidence; it is the humble prayer of the contrite heart that God will not despise.

O for a faith that will not shrink,
Though pressed by every foe,
That will not tremble on the brink
Of any earthly woe!

That might of faith, O Lord, bestow!
Which cannot ask in vain;
Which will not let the angel go
Until the prayer it gain.

Twenty-sixth Day.

"Lo! here is one greater than the temple."

Many run to divers places to visit the memorials of saints departed, are full of admiration at hearing of their deeds, behold with awe the spacious buildings of their temples, and find their affections moved by whatever is connected with their memory. But, behold, thou art thyself here present with me on thine altar, my God! Creator of men, and Lord of angels.

Arise, O King of grace, arise!
And enter to thy rest,
Lo! thy Church waits with longing eyes
Thus to be owned and blest.

Enter with all thy glorious train,
Thy spirit and thy word;
All that the ark did once contain
Could no such grace afford.

Twenty-seventh Day.

"TAKE, therefore, no thought for the morrow; for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself."

It is a vain thing and unprofitable to be either disturbed or pleased about future things, which perhaps may never come to pass.

Lord, my times are in thy hand;
All my sanguine hopes have planned
To thy wisdom I resign,
And would make thy purpose mine.

O to live exempt from care,
By the energy of prayer;
Strong in faith, with mind subdued,
Glowing yet with gratitude!

Twenty-eighth Day.

"The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations."

"Why art thou cast down, O my soul? And why art thou disquieted within me? Hope thou in God."

To find the path of duty, take all the circumstances and weigh them candidly, taking the Bible for your guide, and asking God to enlighten your mind. If you sincerely and patiently wait on him, light will eventually dawn on your path. It may, at first, be but a faint glimmer, and you may see but one step where you can place your foot; but take that, and another will then be discovered; and if you see one step at a time, it is all you ought to ask.

Send kindly light amid the encircling gloom,
And lead me on!

The night is dark, and I am far from home;
Lead thou me on!
Keep thou my feet; I do not ask to see
The distant scene; one step 's enough for me.

Twenty-ninth Day.

"SEARCH me, O God, and know my heart, try me and know my thoughts, and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me into the way everlasting."

However we may succeed in concealing our thoughts from the world, there is an eye which constantly fastens its observation on us, to which darkness and light are both alike, and which can pierce the thickest veil with which we cover our hearts.

I want a principle within
Of jealous, godly fear,
A sensibility to sin,
A pain to find it near.

Quick as the apple of an eye,
O God, my conscience make;
Awake my soul when sin is nigh,
And keep it still awake.

Thirtieth Day.

"WHOM have I in heaven but thee; and whom on earth do I love in comparison with thee? Though my heart and my flesh fail, God is the strength of my heart and my portion for ever."

The sincere Christian believes that God exists, and that all things are under his providence and moral government; and he has not such a mere belief as might make him assent to these propositions, if proposed to him in words, but he has a faith in them that is habitual, intimate, and which influences all his principles and affections.

God is thy light; — never, my soul, despair
In hours of thy distress;
The sun withdraws and earth is dark and drear, —
Thy light shall never cease!
On days of joy with splendor beaming,
Through nights of grief its rays are gleaming:
God is thy light.

God is thy strength; — throughout the earth he reigns
With wisdom, love, and might;
The stars go on, the sun his course maintains,
Beneath his watchful sight;
In silence, onward still proceeding,
The universe obeys his leading:
Do thou the same!

Thirty-first Day.

"And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength. This is the first commandment."

Let those who are conscious that they

have not the love of God within them as they ought to have it, endeavor to acquire and increase this holy principle by seriousness of mind, by habitual meditation, by devout reading, devout conversation, devout society. These are all aids and helps towards inducing upon the mind this most desirable, nay, blessed frame and temper, and of fixing it in us, and forasmuch as it is declared in Scripture to be shed abroad in the heart by the Spirit of God, let us labor in our prayers for this best gift.

Thou hidden love of God, whose height,
Whose depths unfathomed, no man knows;
I see from far thy beauteous light,
Inly I sigh for thy repose.
My heart is pained, nor can it be
At rest, till it find rest in thee.

NOVEMBER.

First Day.

"BLESS the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me bless his holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits: who forgiveth all thine iniquities, who healeth all thy diseases."

God, who is absolute goodness, cannot love any of his creatures, and take pleasure in them, without bestowing a communication of his goodness and likeness upon them; God cannot make a Gospel to promise men life and happiness hereafter, without they are regenerated and fit partakers of his holiness. As soon may heaven and hell be reconciled together as God can be indulgent to any sin, in whomsoever it may be. As soon may light and darkness be

espoused together, and midnight be married to noonday, as God can be joined in a league of friendship to any careless or wicked soul.

No works shall find acceptance in the day
When all disguises shall be rent away,
That square not truly with the Scripture plan,
Nor spring from love to God, or love to man.
Such as our motive is, our aim must be;
If this be servile, that can ne'er be free.

Second Day.

"HEAR my prayer, O God: give ear to the words of my mouth."

All times are seasonable for prayer, but let it be performed as a solemn duty morning and evening, that God may begin and end all our business, and the outgoing of the morning and evening may praise him; for so we bless God, and God blesses us.

And yet fail not to find or make opportunities to worship at some other times of the day; at least by ejaculations and short addresses, more or less, longer or shorter, as you can, or are permitted. Always remembering that, as every sin is a degree of danger and unsafety, so every pious prayer, a well-employed opportunity, is a degree of return to hope and pardon.

Prayer ardent opens heaven, lets down a stream
Of glory on the consecrated hour
Of man in audience with the Deity.

Third Day.

"My soul, wait thou only upon God; for my expectation is from him."

If we would abide with our Heavenly Father, we must co-operate with him perpetually. It is doing his will, not contem-

plating it, that teaches us his attributes, and builds us up in his image and likeness. His fields are ever white unto the harvest; let us work while it is yet day, ever bearing in mind that he gives us the power to work, and that we can work rightly only so long as we live in the constant acknowledgment of our dependence upon him.

Haste not! let no thoughtless deed
Mar for e'er the spirit's speed;
Ponder well and know the right,
Onward then, with all thy might.

Rest not! life is sweeping by:
Do and dare before you die;
Haste not! rest not! conflicts past,
God shall crown thy work at last.

Fourth Day.

"Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man,

the things which God hath prepared for them that love him."

What proportion is there between what we do upon earth and what we hope for in heaven? The primitive Christians rejoiced at the prospect of their hope; heaven seemed open before them; neither trouble, nor disgrace, nor a cruel death, could divert them from the view of it. They knew the infinite bounty that was to reward their sufferings; therefore they thought they could not suffer too much. They were full of joy whenever they were deemed worthy of some great humiliation; and we cowardly souls wish to suffer nothing; and the reason is, because we want those hopes that should support us. The least crosses overwhelm us, even those that spring from our pride, our folly, or our effeminacy.

O Father, in whose mighty hand
The boundless years and ages lie,
Teach us the boon of life to prize,
And use the moments as they fly.

To crowd the narrow span of life
With wise designs and virtuous deeds;
So shall we wake from death's dark night
To share the glory that succeeds.

Fifth Day.

"PEACE I leave with you, my peace I give unto you. Not as the world giveth give I unto you."

All men seek for peace, but they do not seek it where it is to be found. The peace which the world can give is as different from that which God bestows, as God is different from men; or rather, the world promises peace, but never gives it.

Quiet from God! to feel
The heavenly rest begin,
The peace the Spirit doth reveal,
Quiet around, within.

Quiet from God! E'en death
Cannot its rest destroy;
'T is but release from mortal breath
For an immortal joy.

Sixth Day.

"And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh."

There is nothing contrary to God in the whole world, nothing that fights against him but self-will. This is the strong castle that we all keep garrisoned against heaven in every one of our hearts, which God layeth continually siege unto; and it must be conquered and demolished before we can conquer heaven. There is nothing in the whole world able to do us good or hurt but God and our own will; neither riches nor poverty, nor disgrace nor honor, nor life nor death, nor angels nor devils, but willing or not willing as we ought.

O thou great Arbiter of Life and Death,
Who know'st no motive but my bliss, and hast ordained
A rise in blessing, — with the Patriarch's joy
Thy call I follow to a land unknown.
I trust in thee, and know in whom I trust;
Or life or death is equal, neither weighs;
All weight in this, — O let me live to Thee!

Seventh Day.

"KEEP thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life."

Purity of intention and firmness in the right are such excellent graces, that they sanctify the most common actions of our life; and yet so necessary, that without them the very best actions are imperfect and vicious. In every action reflect upon the end; and in your undertaking it, consider why you do it, and what you propound to yourself for a reward, and to your action as it end. He that lightly esteems

the world and its appendant vanities is the best judge, and the most secure of his intentions, because he is the farthest removed from a temptation. Every success over ourselves, all inward victories, are testimonies to the purity of our intentions; and in what degree we despise sensual pleasures, or secular honors, or worldly reputation, in the same degree we shall conclude our heart right to religion and spiritual designs.

Throned on composure, if the soul thus reigns,
Which no alluring hopes or dreams abuse,
But o'er the wreck of perished joys and pains
Calmly contemplative its course pursues,
Strong, self-possessed, 't is not from what it gains,
But what it can resign, such power accrues.

Eighth Day.

"It is God that girdeth me with strength, and maketh my way perfect."

The Christian learns by frequent experience that he cannot live without prayer. And so he prays daily and hourly, not as a duty, but as a necessity, — prays when it is necessary, be it seldom or often, — prays till the need is supplied, till the hunger has ceased, till the empty soul is filled, till his weakness has been made strength, till his weariness has changed to inward rest. And then, having prayed from necessity, he prays again spontaneously, the prayer of thanksgiving and gratitude, the acknowledgment of this new life.

Shall I not rejoice
That I have learned at last to know his voice
From man's? I will rejoice! my soaring soul
Now hath redeemed her birthright of the day,
And won, through clouds, to Him, her own unfettered way!

Ninth Day.

"And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin, but the spirit is life because of righteousness."

He that really endeavors to mortify his sinful tendencies, and to comply with that truth in his life which his conscience is convinced of, is nearer a Christian, though he never heard of Christ, than he that believes all the popular articles of the Christian faith, and plainly denieth Christ in his life. We say, "Lo, here is Christ," and "Lo, there is Christ," in these and these opinions; whereas, in truth, Christ is neither here nor there, nor anywhere but where the spirit of Christ, where the life of Christ is.

From the darkened sky come forth
Countless stars. A wondrous birth!
So may gleams of glory dart
From this dim abyss, my heart.

Tenth Day.

"It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in man."

We are always trusting to one another, to weak friends, to unfaithful servants; yet we fear to put our trust and confidence in God. The world promises and we believe; but when God commands, we doubt whether we should believe or not. Let us restore the true order of things, and regulate our confidence by proper estimates of God's power.

Refine and purge my earthly part;
But oh! inflame and fire my heart,
My frailty help, my wrong control;
Submit the senses to the soul,
And when rebellious they are grown,
Then lay thy hand and hold them down.
Make me eternal truths receive,
And practise all that I believe.

Eleventh Day.

"For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God."

Whatever our sorrows, whatever our loneliness may be, in whatever way we may be disappointed or forsaken, a practical faith that the mightiest of all beings, that the wisest and best of all beings, is ever nigh to us, fills up the void and surrounds us with an eternal sympathy.

Who is alone, if God is nigh?
Who shall repine at loss of friends,
While he has one of boundless power
Whose constant kindness never ends,
Whose presence felt enhances joy,

Whose love can stop the flowing tear,
And cause upon the darkest cloud
The pledge of mercy to appear?

Twelfth Day.

"For our heart shall rejoice in him, because we have trusted in his holy name."

Let a cheerful religion pervade thy heart, and be manifested in thy life; be not thou noted for much speaking; but let thy simplicity and singleness of spirit proclaim the beauty of thy profession and the soundness of thy faith. Remember, it is not all those who say, Lord, Lord, who shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but they who *do* the will of their Father in heaven.

What is bestowed receive with thankful heart;
Here is no home: forth, pilgrim, on thy road!
This is a wilderness in which thou art;

Look up on high, then humbly thank thy God.
Forsake thy sin, and bid thy spirit rise,
And truth shall guide thee to more genial skies.

Thirteenth Day.

"Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be which thou hast provided?"

Deplorable is the blindness of mankind, who will not think of death, but who will divert their minds from what is inevitable, and which they might render happy by meditating on it. To those who are fond of this life, nothing is so terrible as death. It is strange that, after the experience of so many ages, we should not judge more solidly of the present and the future, so as to take proper measures in the one for the other. We are infatuated with this world, as if it were never to have an end; and we

neglect the next, as if it had no beginning. What will the happiest life here avail, if by prudent and Christian means it leads us not to a sweeter and happier death?

The world can never give
The bliss for which we sigh.
'Tis not the whole of life to live,
Nor all of death to die.

Beyond this world of tears
There is a life above,
Unmeasured by the flight of years,
And all that life is love.

[illegible] Day.

"THERE is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy dwelling-place of the Most High."

The Gospel is a true Bethesda, a pool of grace, where such poor and infirm creatures

as we are, upon the moving of God's Spirit in it, may descend down, not only to wash our skin and outside, but also to be cured of our diseases within. And whatever the world thinks, there is a powerful Spirit that moves upon these waters, the waters of the Gospel, spreading its gentle, healing, quickening wings over our souls. The Gospel is not like the Abana and Pharpar, those common rivers of Damascus, that could only cleanse the outside, but is a true Jordan, in which such leprous Naamans as we all are may wash and be cleansed. Blessed indeed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered.

There shall I bathe my weary soul
In seas of heavenly rest,
And not a wave of trouble roll
Across my peaceful breast.

Fifteenth Day.

"The law of the spirit of life which is in Christ Jesus."

This law is a law of love, which is the most powerful in the world, and yet it freeth us in a manner from all law without us, because it maketh us become a law unto ourselves. The inward law of the Gospel, the "law of the spirit of life," than which nothing can be more free and ingenuous, does not actuate us by principles without us, but is an inward, self-moving, living principle in our hearts.

To labor and to love,
  To pardon and endure,
To lift thy heart to God above
  And keep thy conscience pure,—

Be this thy constant aim,
  Thy prayer, and thy delight,
What matter who should whisper blame,
  Or who should scorn or slight?

What matter if thy God approve,
And if within thy breast
Thou feel the comfort of his love,
The earnest of his rest?

Sixteenth Day.

"ARISE and be doing, and the Lord be with thee."

How speaks the present hour? Act!
Walk, upward glancing;
So shall thy footsteps in glory be tracked,
Slow, but advancing.
Scorn not the smallness of daily endeavor,
Let the great meaning ennoble it ever.
Droop not o'er efforts expended in vain,
Work, as believing that labor is gain.

What doth the future say? Hope!
Turn thy face sunward!
Look where light fringes the far-rising slope,
Day cometh onward!

Watch! though so long be the twilight delaying,
Let the first sunbeam arise on thee praying.
Fear not, for greater is God by thy side
Than armies of Satan against thee allied.

Seventeenth Day.

"JESUS said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind."

Here you have a rule of life laid down for you by an authority which you are bound to obey. No room is left for spiritual pride, no plea for accusing you of presumption; you are simply obeying a law. You are not to choose the details or manner of that obedience for yourself; they are settled for you, and you have only to do what you are directed because you are directed. The spiritual growth that would be the result of such a life of quiet, sim-

ple obedience can scarcely be calculated. What can we conceive of the life of an angel, except that it is an act of unquestioning obedience, springing from a heart composed entirely of love?

"With all thy heart!" no idol thing,
Though close around the heart it twine,
Its interposing shade must fling,
To darken that pure love of thine.

Eighteenth Day.

"LORD, how oft shall my brother sin against me and I forgive him? Till seven times? Jesus saith, I say not unto thee until seven times, but until seventy times seven."

Humility is the most excellent natural cure for anger in the world; for he that, by daily considering his own infirmities

and failings, makes the error of his neighbor or servant to be his own case, and remembers that he daily needs God's pardon and his brother's charity, will not be apt to rage at the levities, or misfortunes, or indiscretions, of another.

The guiltless spirit, and the mind
From pride, from passion, ever free,
Patient and just, and pure and kind,
Are faint descriptions, Lord, of thee!

Fain would I wear thy lovely form,
And in each sacred virtue shine;
O may thy Spirit on my soul
Deep trace the portraiture divine.

Nineteenth Day.

"And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep; for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed."

Never talk with any man or undertake any trifling employment merely to pass away the time; for every day well spent may become a day of salvation, and time rightly employed is an acceptable time. And remember that the time thou triflest away was given thee to repent in, to work out thy salvation, to lay up against the day of judgment a treasure of good works, that time may be crowned with eternity.

Know'st thou yesterday, its aim and reason,
Work'st thou well to-day for worthy things,
Then calmly wait to-morrow's hidden season,
And fear not thou what hap soe'er it brings.

Twentieth Day.

"Now if any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his."

If we would indeed know divine truths, the only way to come to this is by the

keeping of Christ's commandments. The grossness of our apprehension in spiritual things, and our many mistakes that we have about them, proceed from nothing but those dull and foggy streams which rise from our distempered hearts, and becloud our understandings. If we did but heartily comply with Christ's commandments, and purge our hearts from all sensual affections, we should find the great eternal God inwardly teaching our souls, and continually instructing us more and more in the mysteries of his will.

Our blest Redeemer, ere he breathed
His tender, last farewell,
A guide, a comforter bequeathed,
With us to dwell.

Spirit of purity and grace,
Our weakness pitying see;
O make our hearts thy dwelling-place,
And worthier thee.

Twenty-first Day.

"O MY Father! if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will but as thou wilt."

If we would pray with Jesus, we must pray with the same temper of mind and complete resignation which animated his prayer, and with the same deep conviction that the will of our Father is eternal justice, and infinite wisdom, and infinite mercy; and therefore not only must, but ought, to be done.

My God! my Father! while I stray
Far from my home on life's rough way,
O teach me from my heart to say
Thy will, my God! be done.

Renew my heart from day to day,
Blend it with thine, and take away
Whate'er now makes it hard to say
Thy will, my God! be done.

Twenty-second Day.

"He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him."

In our blindness to futurity we often rejoice at what becomes our misfortune, and weep over the sources of our felicity. This consideration should lead us to moderate both our joys and our sorrows, and induce us from reason as well as religion to submit with something more than patience to the high hand of Heaven.

One adequate support
For the calamities of mortal life
Exists, one only; — an assured belief
That the procession of our fate, howe'er
Sad or disturbed, is ordered by a Being
Of infinite benevolence and power,
Whose everlasting purposes embrace
All accidents, converting them to good.

Twenty-third Day.

"COME, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me in; sick, and ye visited me."

With the animating promises of Scripture before thee, O my soul! canst thou be so indolent, so selfish, so hard of heart, as to disregard them? Say not to thyself, I am poor, and can do nothing; I am weak, and have no strength for others! Take care, thou slothful soul, that thou deceive not thyself. God has given to thee, as to all, powers which must be carefully directed; capacities which must be improved; and ability for good in some sphere or other. Resolve firmly now, before thou dost enter on the busy cares of the day, —

resolve that thy time shall be spent in the faithful performance of all thy duties. Consider that thou art accountable for thy deeds, and that time and opportunity, once past, will not return.

Lord of my life, O may thy praise
Employ my noblest powers,
Whose goodness lengthens out my days
And fills my working hours.

O let the same Almighty power
My waking hours attend,
From every danger, every snare,
My heedless steps defend!

Twenty-fourth Day.

"And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars, for ever and ever."

Listen to the holy stars. Listen in the

still night. They watch while the world sleeps. By their light, and their beauty, and their vastness, by that elevation of theirs which is congenial to spirit, and addresses itself to spirit, they will speak to the soul which watches with them, and draw it upwards to themselves, where orb hangs above orb, and the small and shaded earth may be for a time forgotten.

The spacious firmament on high,
With all the blue, ethereal sky,
And spangled heavens, a shining frame,
Their great Original proclaim.

Twenty-fifth Day.

"Lord, to whom shall we go; thou hast the words of eternal life."

It is to Jesus that we are to listen. Men are no further to be heard or believed than

as they have the truth and authority of Jesus Christ. Books are good in proportion as they teach the truths of the Gospel; let us then go to this sacred fountain. Jesus spoke and acted that we may hear him and study with attention the actions of his life. Wretched that we are, we follow our own vain thoughts, and neglect the truth itself, whose words give eternal life.

'T is religion that can give
Sweetest pleasures while we live;
'T is religion must supply
Solid comfort when we die;
After death, its joys will be
Lasting as eternity

Twenty-sixth Day.

"In your patience possess ye your souls. Great peace have they who love thee, O Lord! the end of holiness is quietness and assurance."

Patience and faith are not sources of joy which are found only in some favored places, which flow only at particular seasons, but they are fixed for ever in the unfathomed depths of human nature, springing up into everlasting life.

Give me a faith shall never fail,
One that shall always work by love;
And then, whatever foes assail,
May they but higher courage move
More boldly for the truth to strive,
And more by faith in Thee to live.
A heart that loves to trust in thee,
A patient heart, create in me!

Twenty-seventh Day.

"Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men. Avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away. Ponder the path of thy feet, and let all thy way be established."

How often do we confess the same sins and pray against them, and yet still commit them as much as ever, and lie as deeply under the power of them! We raise a great deal of dust with our feet, but we do not move from off the ground on which we stood. We do not go forward at all. We do, and undo. We weave sometimes a web of holiness, but we let evil and thoughtless purposes in, and unravel all again.

Thou tread'st upon enchanted ground;
Perils and snares beset thee round;
Beware of all; guard every part,
But most the traitor in thy heart.

Twenty-eighth Day.

"How great is the loving kindness of the Lord our God, and his compassion unto such as turn unto him in holiness."

Let us give ourselves up to God without apprehension of danger. He will love us, and make us love him; and that love, increasing daily, shall produce in us all other virtues. He alone shall replenish our hearts, which the world has agitated but never could fill. He will take nothing from us but what makes us unhappy. We shall only be made to alter a little in our actions, and correct the motives of them, by making all referable to him. Then the most ordinary and seemingly indifferent actions shall become exercises of virtue and sources of consolation.

Father of light and life! thou good supreme!
O teach me what is good! teach me Thyself!
Save me from folly, vanity, and vice,
From every low pursuit; and feed my soul
With knowledge, conscious peace, and virtue pure;
Sacred, substantial, never-fading bliss.

Twenty-ninth Day.

"TAKE a psalm, and bring hither the timbrel; the pleasant harp with the psaltery. For this was a statute for Israel, and a law of the God of Jacob."

The living law of the Gospel within us is as if the soul of music should incorporate itself with the instrument, and live in the strings, and move them of their own accord, without any touch or impulse from without. Let us express this sweet, harmonious affection in these jarring times, that so, if it be possible, the world may be tuned into better music.

The soul alone, like a neglected harp,
Grows out of tune, and needs thy hand divine;
Dwell thou within it, touch and tune each chord
Till every note and string shall answer thine.

Thirtieth Day.

"THAT they may be one, even as we are one; I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one."

He would not have been "Son of God" and "Son of Man" had not his words, like his works, with all their adaptation to the circumstances of the times, contained some things that were inexplicable; had they not borne concealed within them the germ of an infinite development, reserved for future ages to unfold. Advance as we may, we can never reach him; our only task need be by taking him more and more into our life and thought, to learn better how to bring forth the treasures that lie concealed in him. All our progress must consist in more correctly understanding and more completely appropriating to ourselves that which is in Christ.

Religion tells of amity sublime
Which no condition can preclude; of One
Who sees all suffering, comprehends all wants,
All weakness fathoms, can supply all needs.
But is that bounty absolute? His gifts,
Are they not still, in some degree, rewards
For acts of service? Can his love extend
To hearts that own not Him?

DECEMBER.

First Day.

"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth."

There was a period in eternity, the very thought of which fills the mind with awe; a period when only one Being existed. That mysterious Being was infinite, and therefore incapable of increase or diminution of happiness. Before the contemplation of his attributes and perfections we fall prostrate, adoring the Incomprehensible. But although Incomprehensible, we perceive that his communicative goodness was pleased to create a universe, and to people it with life.

Where'er we turn, thy glories shine,
And all things fair and bright are thine.

Second Day.

"WHY hast thou made me?"

Of God's living universe *we* are permitted to form a part. Do we ask why we were created? What moved the Eternal to create us? It was his own communicative goodness, a wish to impart somewhat of that which he himself enjoyed; and this, in the language of man, we term the promoting of his glory. For ever may our hearts rise in thankfulness to God for our existence, privileges, and hopes.

For God is paid when man receives:
To enjoy is to obey.

Third Day.

"Thou shalt teach them diligently to thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up."

Would we inquire, "When do we accomplish the purpose of our creation?" we cannot but answer, "When we become as happy as our natures are capable of becoming." And if we still go on to inquire, "When shall we become thus happy?" we see the answer plain before us; when our thoughts, words, and actions are conformable to our internal and external light, — to that reason and revelation which the Most High has imparted to man.

Be thou at my right hand,
Then I can never fail;
Uphold thou me, and I shall stand;
Help, and I must prevail.

Fourth Day.

"And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end."

What greatness, what simplicity, what pathos, is there in the character of the Son of God. A shade of melancholy was thrown over his appearance by the fatal certainty of his approaching fate, which heightens the effect of his supernatural greatness. He controls nature, as God created the light by a word. To the waves he says, Peace, be still! and to raise a dead man from the grave, he says only, Lazarus, come forth! He performs the most stupendous miracles without emotion. The Son of God, conscious of his greatness and unconcerned about his fame, except to confine it, leaves the words which he uttered and the miracles which he

wrought to produce their own impression. If you believe in him as he was, if you love what you know of him, and imitate what you love, and study to know him more and more, you will see that he was in the Father and the Father in him; for the more like God, the perfection of all excellence, you become, the more will you feel all that is Godlike in his Son.

In synagogues throughout the land
The Priest and the proud Levite stand,
Dealing without or stint or flaw
The terrors of the ancient law;
But there sits one in wilds apart,
Gentle in aspect, meek in heart,
And from his gracious lips descend
Blessings and blessings without end.
The eager crowd around him press,
His very glance doth heal and bless;
By desert, mountain, rock, and sea,
They follow him continually.
His form is glorious to behold,
His words are drops of living gold,
His face is like a king's, though sad,
Yet in its light all souls are glad;

The base and wicked shrink in fear,
The Christ! the Christ is here!

Fifth Day.

"But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me."

Jesus Christ, on the eve of withdrawing his personal presence from his disciples, gave promise that he would send the Comforter, the Spirit of truth, to guide them into all truth, and bring all his teachings to their remembrance. The promised influence came. God's spirit swept through their souls like rushing breezes; the truths that lay dead in their memories are blown into a flame, their powers of utterance are unloosed. This was the commencement of a new dispensation of the spirit which

ever since has been enjoyed by each individual just so far as they have observed the condition of its reception. Yes, it was the great purpose of Christ in coming into the world, to prepare the way for this new advent of the Divinity in the human soul. It was to remove all obstacles in the way of God's access to humanity, that he, who is always coming, might be always received.

O that the Comforter would come,
Nor visit as a transient guest,
But fix in me his constant home,
And keep possession of my breast;
And make my soul his loved abode,
The temple of indwelling God!

Sixth Day.

"SHALL not God search this out? for he knoweth the secrets of the heart."

The greatness of our guilt arises chiefly

from the greatness of God's goodness towards us, from the particular blessings, the favors, the lights and instruction that we have received from him. Thus, in order to know your own guilt, you must consider your own circumstances, your health, your sickness, your youth or age, your special duties, the happiness of your education, the degree of light and instruction that you have received, the admonitions that you have had, the good motions of grace that you have resisted, the resolutions of amendment that you have so often broken, and the checks of conscience that you have disregarded. It is from this examination that each one must learn the measure and greatness of his own guilt. Frequent and serious reflection upon these things will mightily tend to humble us in our own eyes, and cause us to seek for pardon and strength from God.

Deep regret for follies past,
Talents wasted, time misspent, —

Hearts debased by worldly cares,
Thankless for the blessings lent;—

These, and every secret fault,
Filled with grief and shame, we own;
Humbled at thy feet we bow,
Seeking strength from thee alone.

Seventh Day.

"If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature."

Regeneration means essentially that, besides an outward change of conduct, an inward change of motive is necessary; that we must not only begin to do what is right from conscience, but love what is right and enjoy doing it. And Divine influence means that this new love must be poured into the heart by God, in answer to the sincere prayer of one who hungers and thirsts after goodness.

'T is a new life: thoughts move not as they did,
With slow, uncertain steps across my mind;
In thronging haste, fast pressing on, they bid
The portals open to the viewless wind,
Which comes not save when in the dust is laid
The crown of pride that gilds each mortal brow,
And from before our vision melting fade
The heavens and earth, — their walls are falling now!
And I, a child of God by Christ made free,
Start from death's slumbers to eternity.

Eighth Day.

"Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ."

I will look to my heart, I will examine its hidden thoughts; I will pray for grace and strength to resist temptation, to reform errors, and purify my affections by raising them wholly from whence they came.

My soul, ask thyself if thou art innocent in heart and holy in life; if so, rejoice, for did not thy Saviour say, "Happy are the pure in heart, for they shall see God"? What more could be promised? what higher, more exalted motive could be presented to an immortal mind? Thou shalt see God; yes, and dwell with him. Thou shalt rise from virtue to virtue, and from goodness to perfection.

From the recesses of a lowly spirit
My humble prayer ascends, O Father, hear it!
Plant within this bosom
These seeds of holiness, and bid them blossom
In fragrance and in beauty, bright and vernal
And spring eternal.

Ninth Day.

"Thy word have I hid in my heart."

Were a Christian to live on earth ten thousand years, and peruse the Bible with

the love and faithfulness of a Christian, what would be the consequence of such examination? He would discover more and more of divine eloquence and persuasion, more and more of divine comfort and encouragement. What he examined must remain unchangeably the same; but his perception of its beauty would, age after age, become more and more vivid. He would find the volume of revelation to resemble the sublimest music; it would grow upon his ear, and swell his soul; his admiration and delight would never ascend to a point so high, that they could ascend no higher. More enjoyment than he had reached would always remain to be attained. We may consider the Bible in this view, — as a journal of human nature, a record of national and individual experience upon earth. Not only what has been, but much of what is and shall be, is there revealed; not only may nations and empires, we may all find something in its disclosures accommodated to our own cir-

cumstances. We open the sacred volume, and how often we find it speak directly to our own hearts!

What glory gilds thy Word!
Majestic like the sun,
It gives a light to every age,
It gives, but borrows none.

Tenth Day.

"Thy dead men shall live; together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust; for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead."

The achievements of modern chemistry enlarge and elevate our idea of that splendid change which may pass on the meanest relics of humanity. The wonderful transformations in nature are so familiar,

that we forget to consider and admire them. We know that He by whom all things are made must have an energy "whereby he is able to subdue all things to himself." But when a *human* artificer, who confessedly knows nothing of the substance of that matter on which he operates, or of that mind by which he investigates its properties, obtains by sure processes a vital fluid from a coarse mineral, or inflammable air from water, and shining metals from the ashes of wood or sea-weed, Philosophy thus seems, by her own advances, to cast more and more of practical scorn upon her own incredulous question, How are the dead raised up, and with what body do they come? Shall a frail and puny inquisitor of nature, whose hand and head must soon return to dust, effect changes thus surprising, and He that created the operative hand, the inquisitive eye, the inventive mind, shall he not show us greater works than these, that we may marvel? Measure the probable excellence

of the work by the infinite superiority of the agent, and then conceive how magnificently he is able to verify the prophetic words, "It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power."

O may we all triumphant rise,
With joy upon our heads return,
And, far above these nether skies
By Thee on eagles' wings upborne,
Through all yon radiant circles move,
And gain the highest heaven of love.

Eleventh Day.

"I WILL love thee, O Lord, my strength."

Put your hands to great things, exercising yourself in prayer and meditation, that you may beget the love of God in your soul. But withal forget not your distaff and spindle; that is, practise those low

and humble virtues which, like flowers, grow at the foot of the cross, — such as serving the poor, visiting the sick, and the care of your family, with the works depending thereupon.

Love is music, where the metre
Makes the harmony the sweeter;
If that tell a heavenly story,
Then the music turns to glory.

Love 's a master ever pleasing,
Bonds untying, burdens easing;
Chide he may, but never rages, —
One whose very work is wages.

Twelfth Day.

"A GRACIOUS woman retaineth honor."

For her religion taketh root downward in humility, and bringeth forth fruit upward in the substantial graces of a Christian, in charity and justice, in fair friendships and

sweetness of society. She has not very much of the forms and outsides of godliness, but is hugely careful for the power of it, for the moral, essential, and useful parts; such which would make her be, not seem, religious. Religion dwells upon her spirit, is incorporated with the work of every day. She does not believe that it was intended to minister to fame and reputation, but the pardon of sins, to the pleasure of God and the salvation of souls.

Hers is a spirit deep and crystal clear;
Calmly beneath her earnest face it lies,
Free without boldness, meek without a fear,
Quicker to look than speak its sympathies;
She hath a natural, wise sincerity,
A simple truthfulness; and these have lent to her
A gentle power the human mind to sway,
Wherewith she guides it through the straight and narrow way.

Thirteenth Day.

"If thou wilt turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day, and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honorable; and shalt honor him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words: then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord.

The Lord's day is the longest day of the week with many, and therefore they must sleep longer that morning, and go sooner to bed that night, than ordinarily they do, that the day may be made of a tolerable length; for their hearts say within them, When will the Sabbath be gone?

Wakeners of prayer in man, his resting bowers
As on he journeys in the narrow way,
Where, Eden-like, Jehovah's walking hours
Are waited for, as in the cool of day,—

Days fixed by God for intercourse with dust,
To raise our thoughts and purify our powers,
Periods appointed to renew our trust,
A gleam of glory after six days' showers!

Fourteenth Day.

"I WILL perform my good word towards you; for I know the thoughts that I think towards you, saith the Lord; then ye shall pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you; and ye shall seek me, and find me."

Prayer is a duty commanded by God and his holy Son. Let us principally ask of God power and assistances to do our duty, to do good works, to live a good life, to die in the fear and favor of God, and eternal life. Our desires must be lasting, and our prayers frequent, assiduous, and continual; not asking for a blessing once, and then leaving it; but daily renewing our

fruits, and exercising our hope, and faith, and patience, and long-suffering, and religion, and self-denial, in all the degrees we should be put to.

O tell me, with a gentle voice,
Thou art my God, and I 'll rejoice!
Filled with thy love, I dare proclaim
The brightest honors of thy name.

Fifteenth Day.

"An idle soul shall suffer hunger."

Although grains of sand and ashes be, apart, of a despicable smallness, and liable to be scattered and blown away, yet the skilful artificer, by a vehement fire, brings numbers of those to afford him that noble substance, glass. So, when these little fragments of time, which, if not carefully looked to, would be dissipated and lost,

come to be managed by a skilful contemplator, and to be improved by the celestial fire of devotion, they may be so ordered as to afford us both looking-glasses to dress our souls by, and prospectives to discover heavenly wonders, and incentives to inflame our hearts with zeal.

O waste not thou the smallest thing
Created by Divinity,
For grains of sand the mountains make,
And atomies infinity.

O waste not, then, the smallest time,
'T is imbecile infirmity,
For well thou know'st, if aught thou know'st,
That seconds form eternity.

Sixteenth Day.

"TAKE heed to your spirit."

There is no situation which we cannot sweeten or embitter at will. If the past is

gloomy, there is no need of dwelling upon it. If the mind can make *one* vigorous exertion, it can another. The same energy you put forth in acquiring knowledge would also enable you to baffle misfortune. Determine not to think of what is painful, resolutely turn away from vexatious subjects, bend all your attention to more elevating interests, and then you defeat the woes of the past. It is *for* the future and in the future that we live.

A nobler lot is cast for thee,
A crown awaits thee in the skies;
With such a hope shall Israel flee,
And yield through weariness the prize?

No, let a careless world repose,
And slumber on through life's short day,
While Israel to the conflict goes,
And bears the glorious prize away.

Seventeenth Day.

"And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him."

Behold Christ as he walks in the Gospels; mark his calmness amid persecution; behold his compassionate bending over the bed of sickness and the bier of death; see him kneel in the bloody sweat of Gethsemane, and himself drink the cup which he by prayer and power removed from other lips. What element of perfection can you, in the search of a transcendent fancy, find, that is not already embodied in that figure, the noblest that ever stood on earth and reflected the light of heaven. But Christ, chief in reason as well as to the heart, has brought to light the world of spirits, and disclosed the laws of the kingdom of God. Follow him through Samaria and Judæa,

with him thread the city, sail the sea, pierce the wilderness, climb the mountain, watch in the garden; stand with his mother and the beloved disciple before the cross, and in his companionship you will love him, and your love will be the power of salvation to your own soul.

If a form meet you, bright, majestic, calm,
With parted hair that floats on either side,
A brow that soothes all trouble and alarm,
Beneath a glory shedding radiance wide;
If the form closely to your pathway glide,
Or bless the shining head for childhood's sake,
Or let one beam of beauty round you slide;
Then safe the way whatever you may take,
Lead it to cushioned ease or to the martyr's stake.

Eighteenth Day.

"He chasteneth us for our profit, that we may be partakers of his holiness."[21]

O what will that joy be, where the soul,

being perfectly prepared for joy, and joy prepared by Christ for the soul, it shall be our business eternally to rejoice! Then shalt thou be sufficiently convinced that thy Redeemer was saving thee, as well when he crossed thy desires as when he granted them,—when he broke thy heart as when he bound it up. Thou poor soul, who prayest for joy, complainest for want of joy, longest for joy, thou shalt then have full joy, as much as thou canst hold, and more than ever thou thoughtest on, or thy heart desired.

Then shall a new, a spirit childhood come,
A fresher sense of life in thee have room!
A life that knows no pain, no death, no tomb!
There sight shall know what faith hath first believed,
There perfect trust thy heart hath not conceived,
There sad'ning thoughts be gone, thy mind here grieved!
Then for the work, my soul, that waits thee there,
A firm, bold heart within thee daily bear,
Undimmed by painful thoughts, unbowed by care.

Nineteenth Day.

"If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them."

Nothing is truly ours but what lives in our spirits. Salvation itself cannot save us so long as it is only without us, no more than health can cure us and make us sound when it is not within us. The Gospel, though it be a sovereign and medicinal thing itself, yet the mere knowing and believing the history of it will do us no good. We can receive no virtue from it till it be inwardly digested and concocted into our souls; till it be made ours and become a living thing in our hearts.

This having learnt, thou hast attained the height
Of wisdom; hope no higher, though all the stars
Thou knowest by name, and all the ethereal powers,
Only add deeds to thy knowledge answerable.
Add virtue, temperance, patience, — love

By name to come called charity, — the soul
Of all the rest; then shalt thou not lament
This paradise, but shalt possess
A paradise within thee, happier far.

Twentieth Day.

"THAT if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved."

All true knowledge doth naturally of itself tend to God, who is the fountain of it, and would ever be raising of our souls up upon its wings thither, did not we detain it, and hold it down in unrighteousness. All true knowledge to a wise man, to a truly sanctified mind, is but matter for divinity to work upon. Religion is the queen of all these inward endowments of the soul.

Theories, which thousands cherish,
  Pass like clouds which sweep the sky;
Creeds and dogmas all may perish,
  Truth herself can never die.

From the glorious heavens above her
  She has shed her beams abroad,
That the souls who truly love her
  May become the sons of God.

Twenty-first Day.

"While I was musing, the fire burned."

So, perhaps, it was with St. Augustine, when he determined to give three days and nights to prayer and meditation, that he might understand the mystery of the Trinity. On the third night he was overcome with sleep, and dreamed he was walking on the sea-shore. There he saw a little child, who was scooping a hole in the sand, and filling it with sea-water from a shell. "What art thou doing, my child?"

said the saint. "I am going," was the answer, "to put all the sea in this hole." "My child, you can never do that," said Augustine. Then the child looked up, the light of the world beaming from his divine eyes, and said, "I can do it, Augustine, as easily as thou canst comprehend the subject of thy contemplations."

Do we attach an undue importance to many other doctrines of human invention? May we remember the striking rebuke contained in this dream of the Christian Father.

Saviour, by the Father given!
Father, by the Son restored,
Spirit-guide from earth to heaven,
Have mercy on us, Lord!

Twenty-second Day.

"They wandered in the wilderness in a solitary way; they found no city to dwell

in. Then they cried unto the Lord in their trouble, and he delivered them out of their distresses."

Our Fathers came hither to a land from which they were never to return. Hither they had brought, and here they were to fix, their hopes, their attachments, and their objects. Some natural tears they shed as they left the pleasant abodes of their fathers, now seen for the last time. They were acting, however, upon a resolution not to be changed. With whatever stifled regrets which might sometimes arise with force to shake the firmest purpose, they had yet committed themselves to Heaven and the elements. A new existence awaited them here; and when they saw these shores, — rough, cold, barbarous, and barren as they then were, — they beheld their country. Here was to be their homes and their property. The morning that beamed on the first night of their repose saw the Pilgrims already established in their coun-

try. Poetry has fancied nothing in the wanderings of heroes so distinct and characteristic. Here was man, indeed, unprotected and unprovided for, on the shore of a rude and fearful wilderness, but it was politic, intelligent, and educated man. A government and a country were to commence with the very first foundations laid under the divine light of the Christian religion. Happy auspices of a happy futurity. Who could desire more for his country than to be able to say that her first existence was with intelligence, her first breath the inspiration of liberty, her first principle the truth of divine religion?

And the heavy night hung dark
The hills and waters o'er,
When a band of exiles moored their bark
On the wild New England shore.

What sought they thus afar?
Bright jewels of the mine?
The wealth of seas, the spoils of war?—
They sought a faith's pure shrine!

Twenty-third Day.

"If it had not been the Lord who was on our side, when men rose up against us, then they had swallowed us up quick, when their wrath was kindled against us: then the proud waters had gone over our soul."

It is remarkable that, in the first great instance of capital legislation in this country, our Pilgrim Fathers went not to the laws of England for their guidance, but to those of God. Like the Israelites of old, they were to be a people surrounded by the heathen; and like the Hebrews, also, they were a free republican people, and needed laws for a community where there was no absolute power, where there were no privileged classes,—laws whose aim should be that equal and exact justice which is the only freedom. By this bold reformation, taking the Hebrew laws in-

stead of the laws of England, the colonists reduced the bloody catalogue of crimes punishable by English law by death down at once from one hundred and fifty to *eleven!*

Ay, call it holy ground,
The soil where first they trod;
They have left unstained what there they found,
Freedom to worship God!

Twenty-fourth Day.

"I WILL direct their work in truth, and I will make an everlasting covenant with them."

The rare and beautiful union of prudence and principle, of firmness and forbearance, of truth and zeal, of earnestness of feeling and discrimination of views, is to be found only in minds pervaded and enlarged by candor. To love and seek in

all things the truth, — to choose and adhere to, before all the solicitations of passion, or the power of prejudice, or the force of public opinion, or the claims of interest, whatever is right and true, — to believe at every juncture of experience or thought that nothing is so desirable or trustworthy as truth, — to scent the truth amidst all popular disguises which disfigure it in the world, — this must be safest and best, if God reigns, and there be an eternal distinction between truth and falsehood, right and wrong. In nothing have we so vital an interest as in truth.

To halls of heavenly truth admission wouldst thou win?
Oft knowledge stands without, while love may enter in.

Twenty-fifth Day.

"For unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord."

What shall we do unto the child that was born at Bethlehem? Acknowledge him. Receive him. Do as the shepherds did when they made haste to go and see with their own eyes what the Lord had made known unto them. Do as the wise men did when they followed his star from the East, and rejoiced when they found him, and opened their treasures before him. Become yourselves like the little children of his kingdom. Transfer his birth from the Jewish manger to your own souls. Let him be found within you, and abide there, and let his day-star arise in your hearts.

It came upon the midnight clear,
That glorious song of old,

From angels bending near the earth
To touch their harps of gold, —
Peace on the earth, good-will to men
From heaven's all-gracious King.
The world in solemn stillness lay
To hear the angels sing.

Still through the cloven skies they come
With peaceful wings unfurled,
And still their heavenly music floats
O'er all the weary world;
Above its sad and lowly plains,
They bend on heavenly wing,
And even o'er its Babel sounds
The blessed angels sing.

Twenty-sixth Day.

"CHARITY never faileth: rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth."

Mildness is the sister of Love, and inseparable from her. With this idea St. Paul says, She beareth all things, endureth all

things. God, who is charity, guides the meek with his counsel, and teaches his ways to the simple. The human mind is so constituted that it resists rigor and yields to softness. A mild word quenches anger, as water quenches fire. Truth uttered with courtesy is heaping coals of fire on the head, or rather throwing roses in the face. How can we resist a foe whose weapons are pearls and diamonds? Some fruits are bitter, but made sweet by sugar; such is reproof, bitter till candied with meekness and preserved with the fire of charity. That sincerity which is not charitable proceeds from a charity which is not sincere.

God is love, saith the Evangel, and our world of woe and sin
Is made light and happy only when God's love is shining in.

Twenty-seventh Day.

"BEFORE they call, I will answer; and while they are speaking, I will hear."

He that converses much with God in prayer, and has a childlike confidence in his word, will certainly be heard; and these answers of prayers are undeniable evidences of the faithfulness and love of God; they also greatly strengthen faith, and promote peace of mind, which belongs to the upright in heart.

What various hindrances we meet
In coming to the mercy-seat!
Yet who that knows the worth of prayer
But wishes to be often there?

Have you no words? Ah! think again:
Words flow apace when you complain,
And fill a fellow-creature's ear
With the sad tale of all your care.

Were half the breath thus vainly spent
To heaven in supplication sent,
Your cheerful theme would oftener be,
"Hear what the Lord hath done for me."

Twenty-eighth Day.

"AND there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light."

Even over the gloomy portals of the grave Christ can write, Blessed are the dead! He alone felt Death's substance. His people only see the shadow. He makes it a Valley of Achor, through which the two spies, Faith and Hope, fetch back Eschol's pledges of the true land of promise.

How sweet, when, waning fast away,
The stars of this dim life decay,
To hail, prophetic of the day,
The golden dawn above, my soul!

To feel we only sink to rise
To sunnier lands and purer skies,
To bind again our broken ties,
In ever living love, my soul!

Twenty-ninth Day.

"I, THE Lord, search the heart; I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings."

Have patience with all things, but chiefly have patience with yourself. Do not lose courage in considering your own imperfections, but instantly set about remedying them; every day begin the task anew. The best way of attaining to Christian perfection is to be aware that you have not yet reached it; but never to be weary of recommencing. For how can you bear patiently your brother's burden, if you will not bear your own? Whosoever is over-

come with a sense of his own faults, will not be able to subdue them. Correction, to answer a good end, must proceed from a tranquil and thoughtful mind.

Be thou faithful, watch and pray;
Murmur not, nor dare repine,
If thy labor seem in vain,
From the dawn to day's decline.

Where the foot of sin has trod
There, unwearied, do thou toil;
Still renew with ready zeal
Effort to reclaim the soil.

Thirtieth Day.

"At evening time it shall be light."

God doth reserve his richest cordials for our sharpest faintings. It is observable that, just after the invasion of Ziklag, in which David's family was carried captive, and they all wept as if they had no more

power to weep, the crown of Israel was brought him, and the people besought him to accept it.

At evening time let there be light!
Life's little day draws near its close;
Around me fall the shades of night, —
The night of death, the grave's repose:
To crown my joys, to end my woes,
At evening time let there be light.

At evening time there shall be light!
For God hath spoken, — it must be;
Fear, doubt, and anguish take their flight!
His glory now has risen on me,
Mine eyes shall his salvation see:
'T is evening time, and there is light.

Thirty-first Day.

"The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved. O Lord, how long? Bless the Lord, O my soul, for his mercy endureth for ever."

We have entered upon the last day of the year; its conflicts and successes, its glorious aspirations and broken resolutions, its defeats and its victories, are over; but not their consequences! And what can we answer to the assertion of the Prophet, The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved! Busy memory recalls cherished hopes fulfilled, new ties formed, severe disappointments, and sad partings, but with faith in God, and wrong struggled down, we have peace under all trials. For all must consider themselves as much under the same care and protection of God as if the world had been made for them alone. We are assured by Scripture that the time and manner of our coming into the world is according to some eternal purpose and direction of Divine Providence, and in such time and place and circumstances as are directed and governed by God for particular ends of his wisdom and goodness, and for our own happiness; so we are by the greatest obli-

gations of gratitude called upon to conform and resign our will to the will of God, thankfully approving and accepting everything that is particular in our state.

My God, I thank thee! may no thought
E'er deem thy chastisement severe;
And may this heart, by sorrow taught,
Calm each wild wish, each idle fear.

Thy mercy bids all nature bloom,
The sun shines bright, and man is gay;
Thine equal mercy spreads the gloom
That darkens o'er his little day.

THE END.

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Thoughts to help and to cheer.
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